The DOINGS of TROOP FIVE

MARSHALL JENKINS

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12-25-1914

to James From
Aunt Effie

"'Come on fellows! Let's catch him!'"

[Page 68]

THE BOY SCOUTS OF TROOP FIVE

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BY

MARSHALL JENKINS

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To

All True Scouts

CONTENTS

CHAPTER		PAGE
I.	The Formation of the Troop	1
II.	The First Day of Scouting	16
III.	The Loyal Knights	28
IV.	Our Troop Football Team	42
V.	First Aid Instruction	59
VI.	Returning the Horse	72
VII.	The Thanksgiving Day Game	83
VIII.	Tracking in the Snow	98
IX.	Troop Meeting	116
X.	The Scout Entertainment	129
XI.	Pocantico Creek	146
XII.	The Three O'clock Express	161
XIII.	The Loyal Knights Again	174
XIV.	The First Overnight Hike	186
XV.	The Decoration Day Game	208
XVI.	The Choosing of the Patrol Leaders	226

THE DOINGS OF TROOP FIVE

CHAPTER I

THE FORMATION OF THE TROOP

WHEN I got out from school that afternoon it was pretty late—I'd been kept in for shooting rubber bands about the room—and I didn't expect to find any of the fellows around. But one of my chums, Buck Ewing, was waiting for me out in front.

"Come on over to my house, Sunny," he said. "I've got an idea."

(I'm called "Sunny," by the way, because I happen to have rather yellow hair, and because one of the fellows once heard my mother say that I had a "sunny disposition." I hate it. My right name is Marshall, and my other name is Jenkins.)

"You see, Sunny," went on Buck, rather excitedly, "father was reading something aloud last evening about the Boy Scouts. It sounded awfully

interesting, and Mother said she didn't see why the boys here didn't try to get up a troop. You know, Laddie Thayer and Sandy McLean did try to start one once, but the fellows all thought it was a regular mollycoddle sort of an affair and none of them wanted to join. I thought so, too, then; but after what Father read last night I guess maybe it isn't after all. They put out fires, and save drowning people, and stop runaways, and all that sort of thing—and then they wear uniforms and march in parades and get clubhouses given to them and go off camping in the summer, and have barrels of fun."

This sounded pretty good to me—especially the camping part.

"Let's start one!" I said. "How do you go about it?"

"Oh, you get several fellows to say they'll join —you need eight to form a 'patrol,' I think—and then you have some older man for a Scout Master, and he gets a commission or something from National Headquarters, and there you are!"

"Let's do it!" I suggested.

"I've spoken to some of the fellows already," said Buck. "Ken Preston and Dug Barnard told me they'd join, and of course Laddie Thayer and Sandy McLean will. Malcolm Graham says he

isn't sure whether his father will let him, and Rusty Leonard and Carl Hayes say it's only a 'sissy' affair and that they won't have anything to do with it. Sandy says he will make his younger brother, Dunk, join, and that he can probably get Foxy Merrit and Benny Sanders. Babe Collins wants to ask his mother first, but he's pretty sure she will let him. Anyhow, with us two, we can be sure of at least eight, and that's enough to start with."

We could not decide at first whom we could have for a Scout Master, and then I suddenly thought of my cousin, Frank Hall, who lived in a town about ten miles away on the same railroad line. He was twenty-two or twenty-three years old, and had only graduated from college a couple of months before. He was in business for himself, so he had plenty of time to spare; and, anyhow, his father was pretty well off. I knew Frank was fond of athletics, and I thought maybe this would just suit him, so I called him up on the telephone that evening. He said he'd want to look the matter up a little first, but that he shouldn't be surprised if he would do it; and anyway to go ahead and round up the "kids" by next Saturday, so that he could come out and look us over.

Buck and I got busy, and by the time Saturday

came we had Laddie Thayer, Sandy and Duncan McLean, Ken Preston, Dug Barnard, Malcolm Graham, Foxy Merrit, Benny Sanders; and Phil Elliott, Floyd Pearce, Irving Watson, and Tub Kent from another part of the town. Babe Collins's mother wouldn't let him join, after all, until she knew what it was going to be like. Carl Hayes and Rusty Leonard were on hand, but they just came over to make fun of the rest of us, and said that they were going to get up a "gang" to come around and lick us, if the troop ever really got started. Then there were a few toughs from the village, who had heard of the thing somehow and just came around without being asked—Toughy Merrill, Micky McCarthy, and a couple of others. Micky was Irish, of course; Toughy was just plain tough; and the rest were Italians.

Altogether, there were over sixteen fellows on hand, and Frank seemed to be pretty well pleased. He looked us all over without saying anything at first, and then he stepped in front of the crowd and cleared his throat.

"Now, fellows," he began, "I'm going to start in by telling you what Scout work is really like, so that each of you can decide for himself whether or not he wants to join the Troop. In the first place, I expect you all to get copies of this Boy

Scout Handbook, which I have here, just as soon as you can. I'll tell you later where you can buy it, and what the price is.

"While I think of it, all the money that you spend in Boy Scout work—whether for the Handbook or uniforms or anything else—you are supposed to earn for yourselves; or, at any rate, not to get it from your parents. You can use your allowances if you want to, of course. Boy Scouts are self-reliant. They don't need other people to help them out. On the contrary, one of their chief duties is to *be prepared,* in various ways, so as to be helpful to others.

"After you get the Handbook I want you to look it all over carefully, especially the parts I have marked in this copy, which I will leave with Sunny Jenkins here. In the meantime, though, I'll read a few selections out loud, so as to give you an idea of real Scout work. Most of you probably think it's merely learning new ways to have a good time, but it isn't. It's learning how to develop yourselves all around so that you can grow up into the sort of man that is really worth while in the world."

Then he gave us a brief talk about the Boy Scout movement in general and read over the requirements for the Tenderfoot badge, and ex-

plained what they were and why there was any object in having them; and after that he told us some of the things a Second-Class Scout learned, and what good it was to learn them—bandaging and other First Aid to the injured; resuscitating drowning people; cooking things in the woods over a fire even without sauce-pans and griddles and so forth; sending messages by some sort of signaling even further than a fellow could yell; following trails in the woods; and a couple of other things.

"Say, let's join, after all!" I heard Carl Hayes whisper to Rusty Leonard. "It sounds as if it was going to be good sport!"

"Naw!" answered Rusty. "It ain't no good! We'll get up a gang of our own and have twice as much fun. Come on down the street and hunt up some of the fellers. There's no use staying here any longer."

They went off together, and then Frank asked how many of us thought we wanted to join. Everybody except the two Italians did, because it certainly sounded interesting, and anyhow there was no harm in trying it; so then he divided us up into two Patrols of eight fellows each. The First Patrol was Buck Ewing, Malcolm Graham, Foxy Merrit, Ken Preston, Dug Barnard, Tub Kent,

Benny Sanders, and Toughy Merrill. The Second Patrol was Sandy McLean, Dunk McLean, Laddie Thayer, Phil Elliott, Irving Watson, Micky McCarthy, Floyd Pearce, and myself.

"Now then!" said Frank. "Each Patrol is supposed to have a Patrol Leader and an Assistant Patrol Leader, who are the officers of the Patrol and responsible for it, just like officers in the army. It needs a fellow who is a good Scout, a good leader, and who has learned to obey orders himself before trying to give them to others. Of course it would hardly be fair for me to pick a permanent Patrol Leader and Assistant just at present, because I don't really know anything about you fellows yet or what you have in you. Consequently, what I have decided to do is this: I will select temporary leaders, so as to have the Troop properly organized; but I will not make the final selections until just before we are ready to go off camping in the summer.

"Then I will pick the fellows who are not only the best leaders, but who have also done the most to deserve it. The highest honor a fellow in either Patrol can get is to be chosen permanent Patrol Leader in June—and the next highest honor, of course, will be Assistant. To win either of them will show that the fellow is better de-

veloped in every way—mentally, morally, and physically—than the rest in the Patrol; that he lives up to the spirit of the Scout Law best, and that he is consequently the most trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, obedient, cheerful, and brave—in short, that he is the best *prepared* in all the things that go to make up a true Scout, and as a result is a manly, well-developed, unselfish boy.

"Anything mean or sneaky or cowardly will put a fellow out of the running absolutely, because it will show that he is not a real Scout and does not deserve to call himself one—much less be placed in command over others. I mean to have all this published in the local papers at the proper time, so that everybody in the town will understand what an honor it is for a boy in the Troop to be able to wear a Patrol Leader's badge.

"Understand, I am not holding this out as a reward for the fellows who do their Scout work best—that is contrary to the true Scout spirit—but I am only telling you what will govern my selection of Patrol Leaders and Assistants in June, so that you will all realize that there is a good deal more to Scout work than merely learning to do things and have a good time doing them, and will consequently *do your best* to live up to the Scout Law and the real spirit of Scout work."

Then he looked us all over carefully and finally picked Malcolm Graham for temporary Leader of the First Patrol, and Ken Preston for Assistant. When it came to the Second Patrol, he chose Irving Watson for Patrol Leader and Micky McCarthy for Assistant.

"There is just one more thing I want to say to you," he stated, after he had finished doing this. "It is in reference to the Daily Good Turn, which I suppose all of you noticed in the Handbook. It may sound foolish or 'sissyish' to you, but it isn't. It simply means being helpful to others—which is the duty of every true man, anyway. After you get into the habit of it, you'll find that it comes just as easy as doing a 'bad turn,' and it will do you yourself more good than anybody else in the end. It isn't being 'sissy,' if you do it in the right spirit; it's being manly—and a fellow who isn't manly doesn't deserve to call himself a Scout, no matter how many Second-Class or First-Class requirements he has managed to pass.

"While you do this Daily Good Turn—it may be small, or it may be large—on your honor as a Scout, still it should be wholly spontaneous—if any of you know what that means. In other words, don't do it merely because you feel it is your duty to, but because you know it comes nat-

ural to a Scout to be helpful and manly. And remember, you must never accept any sort of a reward for doing a simple Good Turn, no matter what it is. You can work for people for money, of course, but you mustn't take money or anything else for doing what any manly, helpful fellow ought to do anyway. I guess you understand what I'm driving at. See that you do it."

Frank looked at his watch and then said that he wouldn't try to do any more that day, because none of us really knew much about actual Scout work as yet; but that if we would all get copies of the Handbook and read up about it, he would come out again on the following Saturday, and we could have our first regular Troop meeting off in the woods some place and take our lunches with us, as we would start some time in the morning and probably not get back until rather late in the afternoon. Then he taught us the regular Scout yell, and also a yell for our own Troop, and after we had practiced those until we got on to them, the preliminary organization meeting (as Frank called it) broke up.

Frank stayed to dinner at our house that evening, and I thought it was a good chance to tell him that the rest of us didn't want either Toughy Merrill or Micky McCarthy in the Troop.

Frank had the nerve to answer that he didn't care whether we did or not; that if they wished to join and passed their Tenderfoot examinations, along with the rest of us, they were going to be in the Troop. I knew Mother didn't especially approve of either Toughy Merrill or Micky, and I thought she was going to say so. But Father spoke first.

"I think you are right in that, Frank," he observed. "So far as I understand it, this Scout movement is intended to build up manliness and character and help the boys to develop, mentally, morally, and physically, in the right direction: and I hardly believe it would be just, to attempt to exclude the class of boys who probably need it most—provided, of course, that their presence does not demoralize the others."

"It won't in my Troop, sir!" stated Frank, pretty positively.

Father said, "No," he guessed it wouldn't; and then went on to ask Frank some questions as to how he intended to run the Troop. Frank explained his ideas pretty thoroughly, and then told how he was going to select the final Patrol Leaders and Assistant Patrol Leaders. Father said it was a splendid idea, and then he seemed to become thoughtful about something. After Frank

had gone, and just as I was about to go upstairs to bed, Father called me over to him.

"Marshall," he said, "if you are selected for either Leader or Assistant of your Patrol, I will buy you the wireless telegraph set you have been so anxious for, and put a hundred dollars in the bank for you into the bargain. What's more, I'll be proud of you."

Then he sent me off to bed.

One morning, the early part of next week, Buck Ewing and I happened to be walking along one of the streets in the town when we noticed a baggage-man coming down the front steps of one of the houses with a trunk almost twice as large as he was on his back. He was a pretty small man, anyway, and he was all bent up under the weight of the trunk, and it looked as if he might fall or be squashed flatter than a pancake at almost any moment.

"Here's a chance to do a Daily Good Turn!" I whispered to Buck. "Let's help him with the trunk."

"All right," answered Buck, and we both went up and put our hands under the two corners of the trunk which were not on the man's back, so as to steady it and make it easier to carry.

But the baggage-man didn't seem to be grate-

ful, as we had thought that he would be. Instead, he partly turned his head and yelled angrily:

"Let go of that!"

He said it so sharply and suddenly that we both jumped a little—partly from surprise, and partly I guess because the man's tone scared us a little. Anyway, we must have given some sort of a push to the trunk that unbalanced it, because the baggage-man began to stagger from side to side, even more than he had done before, and we could see that he was making a desperate effort to keep the trunk from slipping so that he couldn't manage it. But it was so very heavy that I suppose it had to be balanced just right for him to be able to control it, because it toppled a little over to one side, in spite of all the baggage-man's efforts, and then he let go of it altogether and it came down with a crash on the sidewalk and burst open, scattering all sorts of things on the ground. Buck stooped over to pick them up again.

"We're awfully sorry, sir," he said to the baggage-man. "We only wanted to help you! We're Boy Scouts trying to do a Good Turn."

The baggage-man's face was almost purple, and he stood breathing heavily and staring at the trunk with his mouth open as if he was catching

flies; but as Buck finished speaking he came to life and made a grab for us. He didn't get us, though.

" 'Good turn,' hey!" he shouted. "I'll give you both a 'good turn' over my knee if I get hold of you! You young scamps, you!"

Suddenly he reached over for the horsewhip in the express wagon.

"Run, quick!" cried Buck. "He's going to hurt us!"

We dashed down the street as hard as we could go, the baggage-man close behind us shaking the whip and yelling at the top of his lungs.

"This way," panted Buck, when we reached the corner of the street. "Follow me and hurry up! He's gaining on us!"

We turned the corner of the street and then Buck skinned over a high board fence into somebody's back yard.

"Quick!" he cried. "Don't let him see where we have gone to! Hurry!"

I piled over that fence as fast as I could, and had just swung my legs over when the baggage-man came tearing around the corner.

"Come on!" cried Buck. "Don't waste any time!"

He led the way around the other side of the

corner house, over another fence, and again on to the street the baggage wagon was on. We didn't stop there, though, but crossed the street, climbed another fence, cut through two or three yards, and finally came out on another street which was far enough away to be safe. Then Buck sat down on the curbstone and began to fan himself with his cap.

"Whew!" he gasped. "That was an awfully tight squeak! I'll never try to do a Good Turn to anybody again as long as I live!"

CHAPTER II

THE FIRST DAY OF SCOUTING

ALL of us were simply crazy to have Saturday come. Scout work looked so interesting, after reading up about it in the Handbook, that none of us wanted to waste any more time before starting in.

"Do you suppose Mr. Hall will let us build fires in the woods and cook our lunches?" asked Laddie Thayer.

"Sure he will!" answered Phil Elliott confidently. "That's just what Scout work is for, isn't it?"

We thought the train with Frank on it was never going to come (we were all waiting at the station, of course), but it did at length, and Frank dropped off it almost as soon as it stopped. All the fellows rushed up to him, and began talking and asking questions.

"Can we build fires in the woods and cook our lunches?" demanded Laddie.

"When can we take our Tenderfoot examina-

tions?" inquired Phil. "I know most of mine already."

"I brought a hatchet with me. Can't we try to build a lean-to the way the book shows?" This was from Sandy McLean.

"Let's practice Scout's pace!"

"Aw, that's too easy! I could run a mile in eight minutes, instead of twelve, without half trying."

"Mr. Hall, Benny Sanders and I have been practicing sending messages by wig-wag signaling. Why can't we all go out in the woods and do that?"

"Do we have to learn all the Scout Law by heart, or only know what it is?"

"What's the sense of having to light a fire with only two matches? Anybody can do that!"

"Let's play some of the Scout games out in the woods!"

Frank stuck both fingers in his ears.

"Shut up, you kids!" he exclaimed. "I can't even hear myself think, and none of you knows what he is talking about anyway! No, we won't build fires and cook lunches in the woods. We won't do any wig-wag signaling for some time yet—or try to build lean-tos, either! You've got to be able to light a fire with only two matches

and no paper. Of course most of you can run a mile in eight minutes or less. That's easy! Scout's pace means that you must cover the distance in exactly twelve minutes—within thirty seconds, anyway. Yes, you not only have to know the Scout Law by heart, but you must have it so firmly fixed in your minds that you don't have to stop and think what it is. I don't believe any of you are prepared to take the Tenderfoot examination yet; but if any fellow wants to try later he's welcome to. Now suppose you all keep still until we come to the place in the woods where we are going! I'll set the Scout pace for you—fifty steps running and fifty walking—and be sure you all keep it!"

He led us to a place in the woods where there was a sort of clearing and several large rocks to sit on.

"Now sit down, all of you," he said. "And don't interrupt me until I have finished talking! Most of you seem to have a sort of an idea that Scout work is all building fires and cooking lunches, and having a good time generally. Well, it isn't! As I told you before, Scout work is meant to help you fellows make yourselves into the kind of men who are worth something. The most important thing about Scout work, really,

is the Daily Good Turn, and every fellow who takes his Scout Oath is on his honor to do at least one Good Turn every day. Anybody who doesn't intend to do that isn't wanted in this Troop! To be a Scout means that you are better trained and developed than the rest of the boys in the town. A good Scout knows how to give First Aid *properly* to a person who has met with almost any sort of an accident; how to rescue and resuscitate drowning people; what to do in case of contact with a live electric wire; how to help put out fires or get people out of burning buildings; how to stop runaway horses, or save people from being bitten by mad dogs; prevent panic, in theaters or elsewhere: in short, be *prepared* to deal with all emergencies which endanger the lives of other people or himself.

"In addition, a Scout always keeps himself in first-rate condition—mentally, morally, and physically. Part of the Scout Oath, which a Scout promises on his honor to obey, is: 'To keep myself physically strong, mentally awake, and morally straight.' It means a whole lot, too. Scout work teaches you to learn to do things *right* and to get into the habit of doing them thoroughly—and those are what count most for success in everything.

"Then Scoutcraft teaches you a whole lot of things which are not only interesting and useful to know, but are also mighty good training for you—whatever you do in later life. It teaches you how to take care of yourselves in the woods or off camping; how to cook over a campfire without the ordinary kitchen cooking utensils; how to send messages by wig-wag signaling; how to swim properly and save other people's lives, as well as your own, in case of a drowning accident; in short, it develops every side of a fellow and brings out the best there is in him, or, rather, it helps the fellow to do it himself, and become a real man when he grows up—not a man who is mean or selfish or cowardly, but the sort of a man whom people like and respect, and the only sort really worth while growing up into. Scout work doesn't preach, as some people seem to think, but it teaches manliness, and makes a fellow ashamed to be anything else but manly in whatever he does. It makes him trustworthy, loyal, helpful, courteous, cheerful, thrifty, brave, clean, and reverent—and the fellow who is all of those things doesn't need to be afraid of anything much in this world.

"There is plenty of good hard work in Scouting, but the harder the work the greater the fun,

and the more good it will do you. There's a whole lot of satisfaction in being *able* to do things better than somebody else, and know that you're doing them the way they ought to be done. You'll find that out after you've been at Scout work a while. Now I guess you all understand what I have been talking about, don't you?"

"But, Mr. Hall, why can't we start in right now building campfires and cooking and signaling?" asked Phil Elliott. "That's lots more fun than just sitting here talking about them!"

"Now look here, fellows," said Frank. "If we're going to do Scout work at all we're going to go at it properly. We'll have plenty of time later on for cooking and signaling and any other Scout work you want; but we aren't going to take any of it up until you have all passed your Tenderfoot examinations and have shown that you are going to take up your Scout work in the right spirit."

"I think I know my Tenderfoot examination, Mr. Hall," declared Phil Elliott.

"And I'm pretty sure that you don't," answered Frank. "Now we'll see. What is the Scout Law? Stand up and give the Scout salute when you answer."

Phil was a little embarrassed at having to get

up and talk before the whole crowd of us that way, but he didn't lose his nerve.

"A Scout is trustworthy, loyal, helpful, friendly, courteous——" he began.

Frank held up his hand for him to stop.

"Don't rattle them off like that!" he exclaimed. "You don't even know what you're saying! What do you mean when you tell me that a Scout is trustworthy?"

Phil was a little taken aback.

"Why—why—it means that he is—that he is—trustworthy!" he finally stammered.

"I know!" called out Irving Watson. "It means that a Scout's honor is to be trusted!"

"I'm not examining you!" said Frank. "I'm examining Phil Elliott here. Now, Phil, what does it mean to be trustworthy?"

Phil thought a moment.

"I dunno," he returned at length.

"What does it mean, then, for a Scout to be friendly?" went on Frank.

"Oh, that's easy! It means that he must do a Good Turn every day."

"Did you do a Good Turn either to-day or yesterday?" asked Frank.

"Nope!" answered Phil.

"Then you aren't ready to take the Tenderfoot

examination, even if you knew it! No fellow in this Troop will be allowed to take it until he has done his daily Good Turn for at least a week."

"Aw, what's the use of a Daily Good Turn!" exclaimed Micky McCarthy. "That ain't no fun! It's just a Sunday School stunt! Only sissies and mollycoddles do that sort of thing!"

"Oh no, they don't!" returned Frank. "The more manly a fellow is the more willing he is to be helpful to others. I remember reading in the local paper only last week that some man in this very town—Logan I think his name was—had just started out with a wagon-load of groceries to deliver, when an automobile struck the wagon a glancing blow and upset all the stuff into the street. It happened to be rather a tough neighborhood, and some of the 'muckers' who were around there started to grab whatever they could and get away with it. Just then one of the other Scout Troops in the city—we're Troop Five officially, you know—chanced to come along and saw what the trouble was. They not only picked up all the groceries they could find and put them back in the wagon where they belonged, but they kept the muckers from taking anything—although they had to fight them off to do it. Do you call that being sissies or mollycoddles?"

Micky sort of grinned.

"No, I guess not," he answered.

Frank didn't know it, of course, but Micky and Toughy Merrill had been among the "muckers" that the Scouts drove off, and Micky's eye hadn't quite got over being black on account of its having run up against some other fellow's fist.

"All right, then!" continued Frank. "That was a Good Turn which the whole Troop did, and it's only one out of a thousand ways of doing them. A fellow doesn't make himself any less manly on that account, and he'll do himself more good than anybody else if he keeps right at it and does at least one Good Turn every day—so long as he does it naturally and on his honor as a Scout and not just for the sake of being able to brag about it to himself or anyone else. If a fellow is manly he's manly in everything he does; and if he's a 'sissy,' he's a sissy in everything he does. That's all there is to that!"

"Can't we build a fire and cook lunch, Mr. Hall?" asked Phil. "We've all brought our lunches with us."

"What have you got?" inquired Frank.

"Sausages and bread and hard-boiled eggs and crackers and cocoa and bacon and pickles and potatoes," answered Phil.

"Did you bring any pepper and salt or butter or milk and sugar for the cocoa?" Frank questioned. "And what are you going to cook the bacon in? I don't see any frying-pan. Who's got any matches?"

"Got any matches, fellows?" asked Phil. "Mr. Hall's going to let us cook our lunch, after all."

"You said you'd bring the matches!" exclaimed Irving Watson. "None of the rest of us have any."

"I haven't, either," announced Phil. "I forgot to."

Frank laughed.

"I guess you fellows won't do much cooking in the woods to-day," he declared. "While I think of it, let me remind you all that the Scout Motto is: 'Be Prepared.' See that you all live up to it better after this. I guess you'll have to make your lunches off the things that don't need cooking."

"But how about your own lunch, Mr. Hall?" somebody asked. "Aren't you going to eat anything?"

Frank grinned.

"Those sausages aren't any good to you fellows. Let me have them and I'll cook them over a fire on the end of a stick, and then roast the po-

tatoes in the hot ashes. I've brought some matches."

After lunch was over Frank had us go off into the woods in all directions from the place where we had lunch, and see what we could discover in the way of berry bushes, caves, springs, animals' dens, nut trees, good camping places, paths, or anything of that sort, and note the location or make some sort of a mark on a tree, so that we would be able to find them again if we wanted to. We were to keep looking—"field scouting" Frank called it—until he blew his Scout whistle for us to return. When we came back he had each of us report what we had found or seen, so that the others would know about it, too.

Then he had us practice hand and flag signals, using our handkerchiefs for flags; and after that he let us take turns borrowing Sandy McLean's hatchet to cut Scout staves for ourselves, and showed us the proper way to use it so as to cut the staves with the least effort and not cut ourselves instead.

"You'll find they will come in handy for lots of things," he told us. "Especially on hikes. A Scout staff is a mighty good thing to have around in case you meet tramps or ugly dogs, or anything else that might make trouble for you."

By this time it was coming along toward the end of the afternoon, and Frank announced that our first day of Scouting was finished.

"A week from to-day," he said, just before we were ready to start back home, "I want you all to *be prepared* to take your Tenderfoot examination; and then we will be able to start in on real Scout work—First Aid, wig-wag signaling, building fires and cooking in the open, tracking and trailing, and learning to build lean-tos and beds from the branches of trees. And remember that you must do at least one Good Turn every day, or you won't be qualified to take the examination! I'll call for a report from every fellow in the Troop the first thing I do."

"Is making your kid brother wash his face every morning a Good Turn?" asked Laddie Thayer.

"No!" answered Frank. "Not unless you have to give him your share of breakfast to get him to do it."

CHAPTER III

THE LOYAL KNIGHTS

BUCK EWING'S father had offered to let us have an old barn on his place for a Club House, and by the time our next meeting came off we had it fixed up in pretty good shape. We had green and brown curtains at the windows; we had built a sort of a bookshelf along one wall and filled it with books from our own libraries; we had managed to get hold of some broken-down chairs and an old kitchen table which we had fixed up, after a fashion; and we had our Troop flag on the end wall, with a big, homemade bulletin board, on which we tacked up all sorts of clippings and notices about Scout work. Then we had several pictures cut from magazines or newspapers, of camping and athletics and that sort of thing, stuck up on the wall; and we even had one or two college pennants. Altogether, it made a pretty neat-looking Club House; but we didn't spend much time in the house because there was too much Scout work that we

wanted to do outdoors while the weather was good.

The thing we took the greatest fancy to at the beginning was wig-wag signaling, and, after four or five of us had practiced up a little on it, we went off one Saturday on a nice long "hike," or walk, of about twelve miles. The railroad that went through the town ran through a lot of hilly and woody country, and Frank had the First and Second Patrols follow along opposite sides of the track, about half a mile apart, and exchange messages by wig-wag whenever they caught sight of each other. There was a small lake, for which we were heading, a little over five and a half miles along the track, and the Second Patrol reached it about noon. The First Patrol was camped about half a mile away on the other side of the tracks.

We were all glad to get to the lake, as we were rather tired and thirsty. But Frank didn't give us much chance to rest at first. He detailed two fellows to get wood and build a fire, two to find a spring and bring water in a pail which we had carried along with us, and two to cook (he had decided to let us try cooking our lunch this time, so as to get some experience). Laddie Thayer and I were the Signal Corps and we had to hunt up a

clear space among the trees to signal the First Patrol from. They weren't so very far away, actually, of course, but there was a stream about fifteen feet wide and I guess ten or twelve deep between us. It emptied into the lake after a while, but the nearest bridge was almost a quarter of a mile off.

When we began to smell things cooking, Laddie and I wanted to leave the Signal Station and start in eating. We didn't think the First Patrol would be apt to want to signal to us, and even if they did it couldn't be anything important. But Frank, somehow or other, didn't seem to look at it that way!

"How do you know they won't?" he asked. "You're on duty and you want to *be prepared* in case they should. When some of the other fellows are through lunch, I'll send a couple up to relieve you, or else have your lunch brought to you up here; but in the meantime suppose you stay where you belong."

Well, we were both pretty hungry, but one of the Scout laws is *obedience,* and anyway there might be some sense in what Frank said, so we stuck to our Signal Station. It's lucky we did, too, because in about fifteen minutes we saw one of the fellows from the First Patrol come on a

dead run for his Signal Station, snatch up the flag, and begin wig-wagging for all he was worth.

"You call the signals off to me," said Laddie. "I'll put them down on paper to be sure we get them right, and then we can look them up in the Code afterward."

The message we got was:

"212-12-11-222-3 122-12-221-1212-3 1211-112-1-121-2121-3-33-333," which meant, "Send help quick."

It took our Patrol a little while to cross over by way of the bridge, and when we got where we were wanted we found most of the First Patrol up trees and four or five fierce-looking tramps eating their (the First Patrol's) lunch for them.

We'd all brought our staves of course, and we sailed right in. The tramps seemed pretty much surprised at first, but I guess they saw we were really just kids, for they didn't run. Instead, they tried to rush for us and grab the staves away, and one awfully ugly-looking tramp managed to get hold of me by the collar. I felt pretty scared, because I didn't know what way he would choose to kill me, but just then Buck Ewing hit him a crack on the arm with his staff that made him let go, and I dodged away. The fellows in the First Patrol began coming down from the trees now and pick-

ing up their staves which they had left lying on the ground in their hurry to get away, and when the tramps found that even though we were kids we had staves and knew how to use them into the bargain, they gave it up and went off down the road.

Then the First Patrol finished their lunch, while we laughed at them for letting themselves be chased up trees, and after that we started at slow Scout's pace on the hike back home. We passed the tramps on the way, too, but they didn't try to attack us, as I thought maybe they would. They just looked after us and one of them said something under his breath, and then the rest laughed.

It was nearly six o'clock when we got back to the Club House, and it certainly was a sight. The windows had all been broken and the doors taken off their hinges, but the real damage was inside. Everything was all smashed up and scattered around. The bookshelves had been knocked down and the books were strewn all over the floor; the window curtains were gone; the chairs and the table were broken even worse than they had been before; our Troop flag and the pictures had been torn down from the wall; and on top of everything else, a lot of dirt and stones had been dumped all over the floor. On one of the walls

a great black "L. K." was painted. None of us knew what it stood for, but we pretty well guessed that Rusty Leonard and Carl Hayes must have gotten up their "gang" and taken advantage of our being away to break up the Club House. The barn was sort of back in the fields some little distance from Buck's house, so no one would be apt to hear the noise, and, even if they did, they would think we were the ones who were making it.

My, but the fellows were mad! They threatened to do all sorts of things to the gang, if they ever got hold of them; and then Frank suggested that if we fixed the Club House up again and set a watch over it nights that perhaps the gang would try to raid it a second time, and then maybe we could catch them at it. It sounded like a good scheme and we decided to try it.

Anyhow, of course we had to fix up the Club House, and we worked on it all the following Saturday, until nearly eight o'clock at night, before we really had it in shape once more; and then we were so tired that we decided not to begin a watch on it until Monday. We didn't think the gang would try to do anything before then, especially as they probably wouldn't even know that we had fixed it up. We had seen Doc Minnerly and Sleepy Conrad wandering past on the street,

and sort of looking in at us earlier in the afternoon, but then they often passed by Buck's house anyway, so we didn't think anything of it.

Well, that very night the gang raided the Club House again, and smashed things up worse than they had been the first time, if possible. Doc and Sleepy must have belonged to the gang, after all, and been sent up to act as spies on us. We were angry all over that time! If we'd seen either Doc or Sleepy, or Carl Hayes or Rusty Leonard, or even Toughy Merrill (who had never showed up again after the First Troop meeting), there would probably have been a first-class funeral somewhere the next day. But we didn't.

There was nothing to do but repair the damage once more, and we worked afternoons and evenings at it, as much as our parents would let us. We didn't take any chances on it this time, but set a watch, consisting of two fellows, until twelve o'clock every night. Different fellows in the Troop took turns at it, of course, so each fellow had to be on watch less than once a week; and we had arranged that if the ones who were watching saw any of the gang sneaking around they were to blow three short, sharp blasts on the Scout whistle and keep it up until all the other fellows who heard it could come to the rescue.

But for three whole weeks there wasn't even the ghost of an attempt to attack us, and we began to think the gang had broken up or forgotten all about us, or else knew that we were keeping a watch and were afraid to do anything.

Then one evening it came my turn again to watch with Buck Ewing. It was an awfully dark night, and it had been raining, so we stayed inside the barn, and were just wondering whether on account of its being so late—it was nearly eleven by Buck's dollar watch—and being such a bad night, there was any use in keeping guard any longer, when suddenly Buck exclaimed, "Hush!"

I heard a sort of creaking noise, and saw the big barn door begin to move ever so slightly. Then a hand and an arm were thrust through, and soon we saw the figure of a man, or boy, step through the opening; and I knew that by not keeping a close enough watch we had let the gang—if it was the gang—creep up and take us by surprise, so that now it was too late to dash through the barn door and blow the whistle for help.

I was scared stiff, because I didn't know what they'd do to us when they found Buck and myself inside the barn, and I thought of all sorts of horrible things that might happen. But I guess Buck must have had more nerve than I did, for he tip-

toed quietly over to the window. The fellow at the door must have heard him, however, because he stopped stock still for a moment. Then he guessed what it was and gave a shout:

"Come ahead, fellows! There's one of the Boy Scouts in here!"

He flung the door wide open and a whole mob of black figures rushed in. I was afraid Buck was going to be caught, but he managed to fall through the window just in time, and in another moment I heard him giving the alarm signal over and over. I guess he must have gone into the house and opened a window, for nobody seemed to stop him. The crowd in the barn appeared a little startled when they first heard the whistle, and then Rusty Leonard's voice called out:

"Aw, come on, fellows! What are you afraid of? We've got lots of time before anybody gets here! Let's start right in!"

It was pitch dark in the Club House, so they couldn't very well see me, and I guess they must have thought Buck had been the only one inside, for they didn't look around at all, but just set to work smashing things. I tried to think of some sort of noise to make that would scare them away; but I was too much afraid they would find me out and kill me if I tried it, so I just kept as quiet as

I could and hardly dared to even breathe. It seemed like hours before help arrived, but finally I heard the Troop Yell of our Troop:

"Zip-a-Zing! Boom! Boom!
Zip-a-Zing! Boom! Boom!
Troop Five! Troop Five! Troop Five!"

When the gang realized that they were trapped they started to rush out of the barn, but I had made up my mind to capture one of them if I could, and I gave a yell and threw myself upon the fellow nearest to me. He was so taken by surprise that he didn't know what to do at first, but he got over that pretty quickly and gave me one of the hardest punches on the nose I've ever had. Then he tried to pull himself away, but I wouldn't let go, so he threw both of us on the floor and wrestled with me and tried to make me give up by sitting on my stomach and almost squeezing the wind out of me. But he couldn't do it, although he certainly banged me up pretty badly, and I could tell that my nose must be bleeding all over the place. I held on just the same, and after a while a couple of our fellows—Buck Ewing and Laddie Thayer—came rushing into the barn and helped me.

All the rest of the gang had managed to get

away, although some of them had some pretty stiff fighting first, but we had one fellow anyway, and the only question was what to do with him. Some of the crowd wanted to punch his head off right there, and some thought maybe we'd better wait and see what Frank wanted to do with him. Only we couldn't very well get hold of Frank until the next morning, and we didn't want to take any chances of his getting away in the meantime. Finally we decided to tie his hands and feet and leave him in Buck's cellar until Frank came the next day. So we did, and I telephoned Frank the first thing in the morning, before he had come down to breakfast in fact. He didn't appear to be so very much excited over it all, but said he'd probably be over some time in the afternoon, and meanwhile to give the fellow something to eat. The fellow was Rusty Leonard himself, by the way.

About half-past three in the afternoon Frank came strolling in, and we took him to the cellar where Rusty was tied up. Frank looked him over quietly for a minute and then said:

"What other fellows are in this gang of yours?"

I guess Rusty must have had some of the spunk taken out of him by being tied up so long, because

he didn't refuse to answer, as I had expected he probably would.

"Well, there's Carl Hayes and Toughy Merrill and Bitter Weeks——" he began.

"And Sleepy Conrad and Doc Minnerly," somebody suggested.

"Yes," went on Rusty. "And Farmer Griffin and Froggy Crisson and Yocko Yates and Dug Roberts and Dick Eggleston——"

"What does 'L. K.' stand for?" asked Laddie Thayer.

"Loyal Knights!" answered Rusty promptly.

(I've been trying ever since to puzzle out why they called themselves "knights," and what they were "loyal" about. It's too deep for me.)

Frank thought a moment. Then he said:

"Well, kid, I'll tell you how it stands. We know all your gang now, and so we know whom to lay the blame to if there's any more trouble. See this strap?"

He took down a thick one that was hanging on a nail in the wall and showed it to Rusty.

"Yes, I see it," said the "Loyal Knight," looking a little uneasy.

"Very well, then," said Frank. "Now if we ever catch you or any of your gang fooling around here again, the fellow we catch will get such a

good sound basting with this that he'll wish he'd never been born! I'm giving you fair warning now, so if any of you ever get it, it will be your own fault. Want me to give you a taste of it now, so you'll be able to tell the rest what it feels like?"

He stepped back a little as he spoke and raised the strap, with rather an ugly expression on his face. I've never seen Rusty really afraid before, but this time he was. He sort of shrank back and tried to raise his arms to protect himself. Then he actually burst out crying from fear.

"Oh, please don't hurt me!" he begged. "I'll never bother you again, honest!"

Frank gave a kind of laugh and hung the strap back on the nail.

"There! That shows how much nerve you've got!" he declared contemptuously. "I didn't have any idea of hitting you—this time. But if you or any of your gang come around here any more you'll get all that's coming to you! I'm not afraid to do it, either. If there are any consequences I'll take them."

He stooped over and cut the ropes around Rusty's hands and feet.

"You can go now," he said. "Be quick about it."

Rusty made a bee-line for the cellar door, but

just before he reached it, Micky McCarthy gave him an awfully swift kick that nearly knocked him sprawling. He didn't say anything, though, but just streaked it out of the door faster than ever. Frank turned to Micky.

"What sort of work do you call that?" he asked angrily. "Don't you know it's mean and cowardly to kick or punch a fellow when he can't hit back? If any fellow in the Troop ever does that sort of thing again he'll be out of the running for Patrol Leader for good and all!"

Micky looked rather scared, because, naturally, each of us wanted to be the one who was chosen for Patrol Leader or Assistant in June.

CHAPTER IV

OUR TROOP FOOTBALL TEAM

EARLY in November of that year the Hospital suddenly found that it had to raise a lot of money in a hurry to meet a debt of some sort, and Frank suggested that we get up a Troop football team, play some other Scout troop in the city proper on Thanksgiving Day, and charge admission—the proceeds to go to the Hospital. There were three other Scout troops in the city besides ourselves, because the place where we all lived was really a sort of suburb, although it had most of its own stores and churches. Beside, it was on a different railroad line.

The original Scout Troop in the city had been started before the Scout idea really took hold, and they had gone to smash. Troop Two was the oldest Troop in the city—I mean they had been running longest—and they were the best trained and the best all around. Troop Three was made up of Italian boys from some Italian settlement or

other. Troop Four was in connection with some sort of a church, and the assistant rector of the church was their Scout Master. I guess maybe he'd have been pretty good if he had known anything about either boys or Scouting, but as it was he couldn't even keep order at the meetings, and the fellows never did anything but roughhouse.

Frank went around to one of their meetings, however, and suggested that they get up a football team to play us, but the assistant rector couldn't even get them to keep order long enough to vote on it, so finally Frank tried Troop Two instead. Their Scout Master was a Mr. Stead, who was physical director at the High School, and he really knew his business.

Troop Two agreed to it right away, and then Frank got busy making a football team out of our Troop and coaching it. He didn't have so very many to choose from, really, because Father and Mother didn't want me to play, and both Buck Ewing and Benny Sanders were pretty light. But Frank picked out a pretty fair team, just the same. He had Tub Kent, who was the "fatty" of our crowd, for center, and he chose Irving Watson for quarterback. Irving was rather light, but he was solidly built and awfully quick and as

nervy as the dickens. For the three backs he decided on Phil Elliott, Micky McCarthy, and Sandy McLean, who were the three oldest and heaviest fellows in the Troop. For ends he selected Laddie Thayer and Floyd Pearce. The others were Foxy Merrit, Ken Preston, Malcolm Graham, and Dunk McLean. Buck and Benny Sanders were substitutes.

The Loyal Knights must have heard of our team somehow, for after we had been practicing about a week they had the nerve to challenge us to a game to be played a couple of Saturdays before Thanksgiving.

"Aw, we don't want to play them!" said Floyd Pearce, when Frank told us about it. "They'll be rough."

"Well, what if they are?" asked Frank. "You aren't babies, are you? Football's supposed to be a rough game!"

"But they won't play fair! They'll try to punch us and kick us, and everything of that sort."

"Oh, no, they won't! I'll referee and I won't stand for any dirty work. You don't want to give them a chance to say you're afraid of them, do you? You need some real hard practice anyway if you're going to play a good enough game

on Thanksgiving to give the people their money's worth!"

Of course that settled it, but I could see that two or three of the fellows were a little afraid of getting hurt just the same, and would have tried to back out if they hadn't been pretty sure that it would spoil their chances for Patrol Leader.

The day of the football game with the Loyal Knights came at length, although I guess some of the fellows wished it hadn't. They had made up their minds to play for all they were worth, though, and that even if the Loyal Knights—who were a little older and heavier—won, they would know they had been in a game before they got through. From the way Sandy McLean and Phil Elliott and a couple of the others talked I could see that they had made up their minds to win the game and half kill the Loyal Knights in doing it if they could. Frank had told us that he wanted us to play a good, hard, nervy game, but not to try to do any dirty work or even be unnecessarily rough. He said if he caught anybody at it the fellow would be put out of the game, and it would be good-bye to his chances for Patrol Leader.

The Loyal Knights had Rusty Leonard, Carl Hayes, and Toughy Merrill for the three backs,

Butter Weeks for center, Froggy Crisson for quarterback, and Sleepy Conrad, Doc Minnerly, Yocko Yates, Dug Roberts, Dick Eggleston, and Walter Thomas in the line and on the ends.

The Loyal Knights started in with their rough play right from the beginning, just as I knew they would, but Frank had coached the fellows how to meet that sort of a game, and I guess the Knights got jarred up the worst. After a while, however, Rusty Leonard slammed Laddie Thayer right square on the nose with his fist and made it bleed—the nose, I mean. Laddie gave a sort of a cry and covered his face with his hands. Frank rushed in and grabbed Rusty by the shoulder.

"Get out of the game and stay out!" he exclaimed. And Rusty got.

Then Frank turned to the rest of the team.

"Look here!" he said angrily. "We came here to play football, and not to have a prize-fight! If I see any more dirty work on the part of you fellows, I'll call the game off and give the people back their money! Play the game as hard as you like, but play it fair. You don't want to show all the people that Boy Scouts are sportsmen, while you are just muckers, do you?"

That seemed to strike them as pretty straight talk, and there wasn't any more dirty work—not

just then, at least. Laddie's nose wasn't broken or anything of that sort, and after it had stopped bleeding a little he showed his nerve by going right on playing. He knew he'd never have a chance for Patrol Leader if he didn't prove that he had that much courage.

There was no score at all until nearly the end of the second quarter. Then Toughy Merrill got the ball about in the center of the field, and with Carl Hayes and Doc Minnerly for interference he managed to get around Laddie's end, and had almost a clear field before him for a touchdown. The only one to stop him was Phil Elliott, who had been laying pretty far back expecting a punt, as it was the third down with three yards to go. In fact, Toughy Merrill had fallen back as if it were going to be a punt, and that was what had put Laddie off his guard. Anyhow, Phil was there, and when Toughy got near enough he made ready for a flying tackle. But Toughy just stuck his arm out straight and caught Phil right smack in the face with his open hand. He was coming with a good deal of force, too, and Phil simply went over backward and struck the ground rather hard. He was up in a second, however, and chasing after Toughy.

But Toughy had a pretty good start by this

time, and he was very nearly as fast a runner as Phil was anyway, so by the time our man had caught up enough to make a desperate flying tackle from behind, Toughy was so close to the goal line that when he fell he just managed to get the ball across, and the Loyal Knights had made a touchdown.

Phil was awfully angry at the way Toughy had upset him, and he tried to get Frank to call it a foul and have the ball put back where it had been. Only Frank wouldn't do it.

"That's neither a foul nor dirty play!" he answered. "It's only part of the game. It's your own fault for not looking out for it!"

Phil didn't say anything more, but I could see that he had it in for Toughy, if he got a good chance at him. And the chance came about five minutes later! We had the ball on the Loyal Knights' twenty-five-yard line, and Phil tried for an end run. He got around the end all right, but he found Toughy right in front of him. Phil tried to stick his arm out straight, just as Toughy had, but I guess he didn't know how to do it quite right, and Toughy dove right under the arm and slammed Phil to the ground rather hard. Then Phil lost his temper. He deliberately hauled off and swatted Toughy right in the face. This was

too much for Toughy and he let go of Phil long enough to give him a good hard punch back.

By this time several fellows on both teams saw what was happening, and in another minute there would probably have been a general fight if Frank hadn't rushed in and grabbed both Phil and Toughy by the collar. As luck would have it, he had seen the whole thing—although Phil, of course, had hoped that he wouldn't.

"Get out of the game!" he exclaimed to Phil. "You're a disgrace to the name of Scout!" Then he turned to Toughy.

"Are you hurt?" he asked.

"Naw!" said Toughy, rather contemptuously. "It would take more than him to hurt me!"

Phil was still standing close by, and he looked as if he were going to start a fight with Toughy right off, at that. But Frank turned to him again.

"Didn't I tell you to get off the field?" he inquired. "Well, get!"

"He's got to get off, too!" answered Phil, looking at Toughy. "It was his fault just as much as it was mine!"

"No it wasn't," retorted Frank, pretty sharply. "I saw the whole thing. Now get off!"

Phil got, without another word, and I knew that his chances for Patrol Leader were lost.

Right after this Mick McCarthy made a touchdown around the same end on a trick play that threw Toughy off his guard, and then kicked the goal, making the score 7-all in favor of the referee. Micky had been playing a great game all along, anyhow. He was awfully tough and as hard as nails, and he went into the Loyal Knights' line like a cannon ball. You couldn't hurt him. He played a clean game, though, all through, and his tackling was simply great. If he had been playing back instead of Phil the Loyal Knights would never have made their touchdown.

The rest of the game was a struggle from start to finish. The Loyal Knights kicked off, and Micky carried the ball back to their forty-five-yard line before Carl Hayes tackled him. When Phil Elliott had been sent out of the game Micky McCarthy had moved into his place as fullback, Malcolm Graham was taken from the line and put in Micky's old place as halfback, and Buck Ewing took Malcolm's position in the line. Malcolm was a little slow, but he was nearly as heavy as Micky and he didn't mind being hurt. He and Micky made a succession of plunges through the line and short end runs between them which brought the ball to the twenty-five-yard line. The Loyal Knights weren't playing quite so well as

they had at the beginning. They had the advantage of being a little heavier, but after Rusty had been taken out of the game they didn't have any real leader, and they gradually forgot what little they had ever known about team work. Then, besides, they were mad at having the score tied and at the way Phil had punched Toughy—and you never play any game as well when you begin to lose your temper. Our fellows kept their heads and played for all they knew how, and then Frank had coached them in a lot of team plays and trick work and showed them how to use their thinking-machines all the time in a game, and that gradually began to tell.

There was one thing about the Loyal Knights, though. They were an awfully hard team to beat when it came to the last few yards that would mean a touchdown. After we got the ball on their twenty-five-yard line, we worked it down as far as the fifteen-yard line on a couple of trick plays and some dandy plunges through the line by Micky. Then the Loyal Knights seemed to decide that they weren't going to let us go any farther just then, and they held like a stone wall—only more so. Micky tried two more fierce plunges through the line; the first time he gained a scant yard, and the second, Carl Hayes broke

through Buck Ewing and threw him (Micky, I mean) for a two-yard loss. We hated to punt when we were so near the goal line, and Micky tried a trick play which had worked on them once before. Only this time it didn't, and the ball went to the Loyal Knights on downs.

I thought that of course they would punt, but instead they tried a fake trick and Carl Hayes, who was carrying the ball, managed to get clear of the field except for Micky. He made another dandy tackle and brought Carl down on the twenty-yard line. On the next play the Loyal Knights fumbled for the first time, and Buck Ewing fell on the ball.

Malcolm Graham and Sandy McLean and Micky tried line plunging and short end rushes once more, and this time they carried the ball to the five-yard line for the first down. Then the Loyal Knights took a brace, and the next two plays only gained about two yards between them. I was pretty sure our fellows would try an end run next, because they couldn't break through the line for a three-yard gain in one down. Instead of trying a straight end run, however, they made the mistake of trying a trick play which the Loyal Knights had found out, and Sandy McLean, who had the ball, was

stopped before he could get around the end. He stayed on his feet, though, and all the rest of the team piled in behind and tried to push him over for a touchdown. It looked for a moment as if they were going to do it, but the Loyal Knights had the advantage in weight, and as soon as they all got there they stopped Sandy short, and were even pushing him back a little when Micky dived against the legs of the bunch and brought them all to the ground, with the ball only two feet away from the goal line.

This time the Loyal Knights punted out of danger and Sandy ran the ball back to their fifteen-yard line once more. But on the very next play Irving Watson, our quarterback, fumbled the ball and one of the Loyal Knights got it. Then Toughy Merrill made another long end run, and he was only stopped on the forty-five-yard line by Micky. This gave us the ball once more, because he dropped it and Micky fell on it, but we were a long way from the Loyal Knights' goal, and the only thing to do was to try end runs and trick plays. We managed to gain ten yards this way, and then lost the ball to the Loyal Knights on downs.

They tried the same thing themselves, but we were on to their trick plays by this time, and

neither Toughy nor Carl Hayes could get around our ends any more. Finally they lost the ball in turn, and then Sandy tried a new scheme. He punted the ball as far down the field as he could, and our two ends were after it like a shot. Carl Hayes had been laying back a little, but he wasn't expecting a punt, so he wasn't back far enough, and he only just touched the ball as it went sailing over his head. Before he had time to recover it, Dunk McLean, who was one of the fastest runners in the Troop, was down there and threw himself on the ball on the Loyal Knights' twenty-yard line.

I saw Sandy run over and ask Frank something, and then Frank called out:

"First down for Troop Five! Two minutes left to play!"

Then I saw both teams line up quickly, and Malcolm Graham drop back a little, and I knew he was going to try for a field goal. Tub Kent passed the ball, straight as a die, and the line held for all it was worth. Toughy and Carl Hayes got around the ends, of course.

Micky McCarthy blocked off Toughy, and then, just before Carl threw himself on him, Malcolm got off his kick. It sailed through the air right straight for the goal posts, and I was all

ready to let out a big yell when it went over. But it didn't go over. It struck right square on the cross-bar itself and sort of balanced there for a second. Then a little puff of wind came up suddenly, and the ball fell back on the wrong side of the posts!

Time hadn't been called yet, but there was only about a minute left to play, so that really ended the game. When the whistle finally did blow, we all got together and gave our Troop yell for the Loyal Knights. They didn't even bother to cheer us back, they were so mad at not having even beaten us at all, when I guess they had expected to win by a large score. Really we had beaten them, because we played rings around them in the second half, and it was only hard luck that Malcolm didn't kick the field goal which would have given us the game 10-6. We marched off the field shouting and cheering just as though we *had* won, and the Loyal Knights didn't even open their mouths to call us names, as I expected they would.

After I was on my way home with some of the other fellows, I happened to put my hand in my pocket and discovered that I had lost my knife. I thought that it probably had been jounced out of my pocket while I was jumping up and down and

yelling at the game, so I went back to look for it, keeping a careful watch along the sides of the road as I went, of course. When I reached the field again I went right over to where I had been standing and commenced hunting around. It happened to be directly in front of the dressing-room, and all of a sudden I heard voices coming from there. I naturally stood still and listened to see what it was, and I soon found out that one of the voices was Frank's and the other Phil Elliott's. Phil was saying:

"Toughy was just as much to blame as I was! I don't think it's fair to put me out of the running for Patrol Leader just because I lost my head for a moment. I won't do it again!"

Frank said:

"I can't help it, Phil. I warned you fellows what to expect if you did any dirty work, and I can't go back on my word. Besides, I saw the whole thing, and you were the one who was really to blame for it. I'm awfully sorry, but that's all there is to it."

Then Phil began to get sulky.

"I guess I'll get out of your old Troop right now!" he returned. "It's no good anyway! There's no use of my staying in it if I can't be Patrol Leader."

Frank didn't answer for a moment, and then he spoke rather slowly.

"Well, I'll tell you, Phil," he finally said. "So far as I am concerned myself, it doesn't make any difference to me one way or the other whether you stay in or not—but for your own sake I'd advise you to do it. You're a nice enough kid and there are plenty of good things about you, but your big fault is having a swelled head, and you've got to get over it some time or other if you're ever going to amount to anything much. Scout work is just exactly what you need, if you go at it in the right way, and the manly thing for you to do would be to stick right in the Troop and work just as hard to make a good Scout as if you were still in the running for Patrol Leader. If you do that you will be doing a bigger thing than if this had never happened and you had won the Patrol Leadership in June. I know I'll think a good deal more of you and you'll think a good deal more of yourself —which is what really counts. A swelled head is a bad thing for a fellow to have, and the sooner he gets over it, the better it is for him. You think over what I've just said, and if you still want to drop out, why drop! Only remember that if you stay in the Troop I expect you to work just as hard as if you had something besides the satis-

faction of being a good Scout to work for, as the rest have. If you do that, you'll be more worthy of your Scout badge, even if it isn't a Patrol Leader's badge, than any of the others."

Unfortunately, I happened to find my knife just then, so I didn't have any excuse for listening longer.

But I noticed that Phil Elliott stayed in the Troop.

CHAPTER V

FIRST AID INSTRUCTION

AT our next regular indoor Troop meeting on the Friday evening following the football game, Frank had arranged to have Doc Minnerly's father come around to the Club House and give us a talk and demonstration on First Aid to the injured.

Frank himself started the proceedings by making a few remarks on the health and care of the body, just as if he knew anything much about it. He told us that it was a Scout's duty to know how to keep himself in the best possible physical condition and also to do it, so that he would *be prepared* for anything that came up. He told us how the baseball team, which he belonged to at college, trained carefully so as to be able to *do their best;* and then added that a Scout must always be able to do his best, and that good physical condition was about the most important thing for a fellow because practically everything else depended on it.

Then Doc Minnerly's father gave us a few good, simple, workable rules for living so as to keep in shape—like taking cool sponge baths every morning, eating wholesome food and not too much meat and never exercising violently too soon after eating, not drinking coffee or tea, nor using stimulants of any kind, getting enough sleep, and having plenty of fresh air in the bedroom, and that sort of thing. He added that fresh air, sunlight, proper exercise, and plenty of water both inside and out were Nature's rules for health; and that, while most boys were healthy anyway, still it was very important to do as much as possible to preserve and build up the physical condition, as it would mean a great deal to a fellow after he grew into a man.

When this part of the program had finally been finished, Frank got up again and said that while it was every Scout's duty to take the best possible care of himself, it was also his duty to be able to give prompt and intelligent assistance to others, who either became suddenly ill or were injured in some manner. He stated that a Scout should always know and *be prepared* to apply the treatment for fainting, bruise, sprain, fracture, burn, or scald; know how to use the triangular and roller bandages, and how to fix a tourniquet in case of

bleeding from a vein or artery; what to do in case of burning clothing or contact with a live electric wire; treatment for drowning or gas accidents, snake bite, sunstroke, or freezing; how to carry injured persons, and so forth. He said that a good deal of this we couldn't be expected to learn until we were ready to become First-Class Scouts, but that even as Tenderfeet we should be able to do the simpler First Aid work, such as bandaging cuts, applying splints and tourniquets, and knowing the treatment for burns or fainting and the method of resuscitation from drowning, and concluded by saying that Dr. Minnerly had been kind enough to agree to come and show us all these things.

When Frank sat down again, Dr. Minnerly asked Malcolm Graham to stand up before the whole Troop, while he—Dr. Minnerly, that is—bandaged different parts of his body—leg, arm, hand, and head—first with a roller and then with a triangular bandage to show us how it should be done. Then Frank made us practice doing them all under Dr. Minnerly's supervision, so as to be sure that we learned how to do it correctly. If we once got the method right we could practice by ourselves all we wanted to, of course.

After that had been done, Dr. Minnerly showed

us how to apply splints either to a broken arm or leg; and told us how to treat burns, fainting, or fits. The resuscitation from drowning and the various methods of carrying injured persons—fireman's lift, head and feet carry, basket seat carry, or stretcher—we were able to learn ourselves from the directions in the Handbook.

Before we went home, Dr. Minnerly made a physical examination of each one of us, to be sure that our hearts and lungs were in proper working order so that we would be able to go off on long hikes and do our other Scout work without there being any danger that it might be harmful.

It was really quite interesting, but Sandy McLean had to try and act smart by pretending he was fainting and falling off his seat, and lying stretched out flat on the floor with his eyes closed. Dr. Minnerly had just told us that in cases of fainting the first thing to do was to give the patient plenty of air and loosen the clothing at the throat; and then to rub the face and chest with cold water, so a couple of fellows sat on top of Sandy and unbuttoned his Scout uniform at the neck, and then Laddie Thayer tiptoed over to a pitcher of ice water which we always had on a table at one side of the room for our meetings and got a whole glassful of it, which he dashed

right into Sandy's face. Sandy came back to life so quick that he upset the two fellows on top of him, and if it hadn't been that Dr. Minnerly and Frank were present he and Laddie would have had a first-class scrap. As it was he only said:

"Darn you, Laddie Thayer! Wait till I catch you outside some time!"

"Sure I'll wait!" answered Laddie. "I'm not scared of you! I could lick you easy with one hand tied behind my back!"

"Aw, you could, could you!" retorted Sandy. "I'd just like to see you try it some time, that's all!"

"Patrol Leader Watson! Keep order in your Patrol!" called out Frank.

"Shut up and sit down, fellows," Irving said.

"Aw, shut up yourself!" returned Sandy. "You needn't think you're going to boss *me* around like that!"

"Scouts McLean and Thayer, take your seats!" ordered Frank.

Laddie sat down without another word, but Sandy remained standing.

"Scout McLean, what is the seventh point of the Scout Law?" asked Frank.

Sandy considered a little while.

" 'A Scout is obedient: he obeys his parents, Scout Master, Patrol Leader, and all others in authority,' " he answered.

"Well, suppose you live up to it then!" suggested Frank.

Sandy gave a grin and promptly sat down in turn. Frank walked up to the front of the room once more.

"There's one thing I want you fellows to understand definitely," he said. "You've got to take up your Scout work in the right spirit—which simply means living up to the Scout Law. I don't intend to say anything more to either Scout Thayer or Scout McLean, but I don't want this sort of thing to happen again. It isn't behaving the way a true Scout behaves, and besides it will all count when it comes to picking the permanent Patrol Leaders, although I may not say much of anything, or even appear to notice it, at the time. I'll have plenty of chances to size every one of you fellows up between now and next June, and I won't make any mistake in those I choose when the time comes. Now we'll give the Scout yell for Dr. Minnerly to thank him for coming around and helping us out, and then the meeting will be over for to-night."

We gave the yell, of course, and Dr. Minnerly

thanked us. Then just as he was going out he stopped at the door and said:

"Boys, I came over this evening at the request of Mr. Hall, your Scout Master, and because if you were going to undertake First Aid work at all it was very important that you should understand how to do it properly; but I do not hesitate to say, after what I have seen this evening, that I am not a believer in Scout work and would not be willing to have my own boy join a 'troop,' as you call it. I state this with all due respect for your Scout Master, but I cannot believe that Scout work is of any real benefit either to the community or to the Scout himself."

"Thank you, sir!" said Laddie politely, under his breath, as the door closed.

We had planned to have our first real practice in field scouting out of doors the following day (Saturday), but just after breakfast the next morning Frank telephoned that he would not be able to come after all on account of "business engagements," but that if we wanted to try any field scouting ourselves the Troop would be in charge of the Patrol Leaders, and that I was to tell them that under no circumstances must a fire be lighted in the woods so long as he (Frank) was not on hand.

All the fellows had agreed to meet at the Club House by nine o'clock, and as soon as I got there myself I told the Patrol Leaders what Frank had said.

"What shall we do, fellows?" asked Malcolm Graham, the Leader of the First Patrol. "It's too good a day to waste."

"Let's divide up into Patrols and go to different hills some distance apart, and then practice wig-wagging," suggested Irving Watson.

All the fellows liked this idea. There were a couple of good hills about half a mile apart, the farthest one being not over thirty-five or forty minutes' hike through the woods, which would be just right for anything of that sort. Only we couldn't decide at first which Patrol should go to which hill. One hill was a little over half an hour's hike, as I have said, but the other was only fifteen or twenty minutes'; and of course each Patrol wanted to go to the one that was farthest away. Finally Malcolm Graham and Irving Watson, being the two Patrol Leaders, drew straws to see which had the choice. Irving drew the longest one, and of course he chose for our Patrol to take the longest hike.

We went through the woods for a little distance and then came out on the road again and started

to follow it for about a quarter of a mile, when suddenly Laddie Thayer shouted:

"Look, fellows!"

He was pointing down the road, and we could see a big cloud of dust rising around a bend. The next instant something black came into view, and we could hear some shouts and yells.

"It's a runaway!" cried Phil Elliott.

Micky McCarthy shaded his eyes with his hand.

"It looks like a grocery wagon, fellows," he declared. "The horse is running away and there's somebody in the wagon!"

Dunk McLean spoke up:

"Let's try to stop it by standing across the road and holding up our Scout staves," he suggested.

Micky looked at him scornfully.

"That's no way to do!" he exclaimed. "You'd only scare him and make him run faster. The right way is for a fellow to stand on each side of the road, run alongside the horse, and make a jump for the bridle—and then let him drag you until he get's tired out. Only it takes a little nerve! Is anybody else game?"

"Sure. I'm game!" said Phil. He crossed to the other side of the road and set himself all ready

for a sprint when the horse came near. Micky did the same on his side.

Whatever had frightened the horse and started him running away must have scared him pretty badly, for he came tearing toward us at a great rate, with the wagon rattling and bumping and swaying behind him. All of a sudden it struck a rut or something in the road, and lurched way over to one side. I thought it was surely going to overturn, but it didn't. It threw the horse out of his reckoning, though, and he veered to one side of the road instead of keeping in the middle as he had done before. This jerked the wagon clear off the road entirely and it went bang against a telegraph pole and stayed there. The horse broke loose from it entirely and came racing on toward us. Some of the fellows jumped in the middle of the road and waved their Scout sticks. I guess this frightened the horse, but instead of stopping he took a sharp turn, jumped clean over the stone wall at the side of the road, and bolted across the fields toward the woods. Micky ran across the road, and scrambled over the fence after him.

"Come on, fellows! Let's catch him!" he called.

"Half of you go with Micky and the rest come

with me to the wagon," ordered Irving Watson, as Patrol Leader.

Sandy McLean, Laddie Thayer, and myself followed Micky, while the other four dashed over to the wagon to give first aid to the man in it if he had been hurt.

We could see the horse some little distance ahead of us across the fields and going strong. We ran as hard as we could, so as not to lose sight of him if we could help it; but, of course, he was going a great deal faster than we were, and, when he struck into the woods and disappeared, he left us nearly half the width of the field behind.

"Never mind, fellows!" panted Micky. "We can track him easily by the hoofprints, and anyway he can't run very far in those trees!"

When we finally got across the field, however, we discovered that the horse had hit upon a sort of unused wagon track into the woods, and so the only way we could follow him at all was by the hoofmarks.

The wagon trail led to a less dense part of the woods, where there weren't enough trees to really worry the horse any; and we had to follow his tracks through what was known as "Squirrel Grove," across another field, and then on into the

woods once more. We were pretty well winded by this time, although we had gone at Scout's pace ever since leaving the first field, but we kept right ahead.

"He can't have gone so very much farther!" gasped Sandy. "He must have gotten over being scared by this time!"

Sure enough, in another five minutes or so we came to a sort of clearing, and there was the horse, right in the middle, looking rather tired.

"We'd better not let him see any of us at first!" whispered Micky. "He might get scared and start off again if we did. A couple of you fellows go around the other side of the clearing, so as to head him off if he tries to run!"

Laddie Thayer and I sneaked through the underbrush as quietly as we could, until we were on the opposite side of the open space. Then we gave our Patrol call (we had decided to be known as the "Jackal Patrol") to show that it was all right, and Micky and Sandy McLean walked out of the woods and went right up to the horse, one on either side. He never moved a muscle!

"He's tired, all right!" declared Micky, taking hold of the halter. Then he patted the horse's shoulder and stroked his nose.

"We aren't going to hurt you, old fellow," he

said. "You needn't be afraid of us! We're only Boy Scouts doing a Good Turn!"

After that Irving Watson took hold of the bridle on the other side of his head, and we all started back over the trail.

CHAPTER VI

RETURNING THE HORSE

WHEN we reached the road where the accident had happened, however, there was no sign of the other fellows or even of the wagon itself.

"Guess they must have dragged it back to town!" suggested Laddie.

"Well, what's the difference?" inquired Sandy. "All we have to do now is to return the horse."

"But who'll we return it to?" I asked, the thought suddenly striking me that none of us knew whom it belonged to, and that, on account of the wagon and the other fellows being gone, there was now no way to find out.

"That's so!" exclaimed Micky. "Did anybody notice whose grocery wagon it was?"

None of us had.

"Maybe there's some mark on the harness that will show," ventured Sandy.

We looked carefully, but all we could find was a sort of monogram on the blinkers, which we

couldn't quite make out. There seemed to be an E, an S, an L, and a C, but they were so twisted together that they might have been something different after all, and anyway we couldn't tell what order they were supposed to come in.

"Let's turn the old brute loose, and maybe he'll go back home of himself," said Laddie.

"Yes, and maybe he won't," returned Micky. "Now that we've got him it's up to us to find out whom he belongs to. Let's take him back to town, and maybe somebody will recognize him."

"How do we know he didn't come from some other town?" I objected. "There are lots of grocery wagons driving around the country."

"We don't know," said Micky. "That's what we've got to find out! We'll try all the grocery stores in town first, and if none of them will take him we'll walk him to some other town, and keep on until we find the owner."

This sounded as though it might be a pretty good-sized job, but Micky was Assistant Patrol Leader, so there was no help for it. Anyway, we started along the road toward the town with him.

As we reached the outskirts of the residential section, and led the horse along one of the principal streets toward the business part, we noticed

that every now and then people would turn around and look at us sort of curiously; but we knew what we were about, so we didn't pay any particular attention. Finally a well-dressed, undersized little man, who looked as though he thought he owned the earth, stopped still on the sidewalk and watched us for about half a block. Then he came after us at what I suppose he thought was a run.

"What are you doing with that horse, boys?" he asked, just as though it were any of his business.

"We're taking him back to the owner, sir," answered Laddie politely.

"Oh, indeed!" said the man. "And who is the owner?"

"I—we don't know yet, sir," continued Laddie. "We're trying to find out."

"Oh, indeed!" commented the man again. "How did you get him?"

"We found him in the woods, about three-quarters of a mile from town," said Micky. "Not that it's any particular affair of yours!"

"Oh, indeed!" repeated the man. "That's a likely story, that is. I rather think it *is* my affair. Officer!"

He beckoned with his finger, and a fat police-

man, who had been trying to hold up a telegraph post on the corner, waddled toward us.

"Officer," said our friend, "these boys tell a cock-and-bull story about having found this animal wandering in the woods. I think they've stolen it, myself. I'd go and make a complaint against them, but, unfortunately, I have some very important —*very* important—business to attend to, so I'll turn them right over to you now!"

"Thank you, sorr!" said the policeman, touching his cap. "Now, you young rascals, you come right along wid me."

"We aren't rascals at all!" exclaimed Laddie Thayer indignantly. "You just let us alone. We're Boy Scouts doing a Good Turn!"

"You can tell that story to somebody else," rejoined the fat cop. "You come along wid me quietly, if you know what's good for you!"

"Where are you going to take us?" I asked.

"You keep yer eyes open, an' maybe you'll see," he answered. "If any of you tries to run away, I'll throw me stick after him an' hit him in th' head!"

"Aw, you couldn't hit the broad side of a barn wid your old club!" exclaimed Micky, speaking for the first time. "We're none of us going to try to get away. We started out to return this old

skate to its owner, and we're going to do it. You'll get yourself into trouble if you aren't careful!"

"You'd better not try being fresh wid me, young feller!" responded Fatty, turning on Micky. "Who does th' horse belong to, an' where did yez get him?"

"We don't know who he belongs to," spoke up Sandy McLean. "We caught him in the woods, about three-quarters of a mile from town, after chasing him when he broke loose from a grocery wagon."

Then he told the whole story of the accident, and the pursuit and capture of the horse.

"Here are our Tenderfoot badges, if you don't believe we're Boy Scouts," he concluded.

Fatty was examining the monogram on the horse's harness.

"This here animal belongs to the International Eureka Grocery Emporium," he stated finally. "You come along wid me an' see what they say about it."

He led the way toward the main business section of the city, with the rest of us following. Micky and Sandy still had hold of the horse's bridle, while Laddie and I walked alongside. We were all feeling good and mad at his not taking

our word for what we told him; and, besides, we wanted to see what happened. We knew we hadn't done anything to be afraid of.

The International Eureka Grocery Emporium turned out to be a small store in the middle of the block on a side street, and the proprietor was nearly half a size fatter than the policeman—only he was a German.

"I've brought back your horse to ye, sorr," said the policeman, touching his cap again. "These here young rascals was tryin' to get away wid it, but I was too smart for them!"

"Mein horse!" exclaimed the grocer. "Vas dey trying to steal mein horse?"

He looked the brute all over carefully, as if he thought we might have done something or other to him. Then he opened his big German mouth again.

"Vat vas you poys doing mit mein horse, hey? Vere did you get him? He vas hitched on a wagon alreatty yet this morning."

"Vell, he ain't now, alreatty yet," answered Micky. "He vas running avay mit der vagon, und he smashed into a telegraph pole und vent skedaddling through der voods. Now you know!"

The proprietor didn't seem to realize that

Micky was making fun of the way he talked English.

"Vot is dot?" he asked excitedly. "Der vagon vas smash? Vere vas he smash?"

"In der front, of course," answered Micky, managing somehow to keep a straight face, in spite of the way the Irish policeman was looking at him. "It vas on der Fingerboard road, half a mile out of der town, und der skate broke loose und vent off in der voods! He'd have been running yet if we hadn't caught him."

The grocer looked clever enough, but it seemed to take him a long time to get anything through his head.

"But you poys vas trying to steal der horse vhen Officer O'Flaherty caught you, ain't it?"

"Trying to steal your grandmother!" retorted Micky. "What would we want of your skinny old skate? We were trying to find out who belonged to him when dis kind cop butted in."

"Them boys was a-walkin' down the street lookin' for an old stable to hide the horse in," declared Fatty. "But I had me eyes peeled, an' I pinched 'em an' brought the horse back to yez. A couple of days in the cooler an' a good spankin' is what them young rascals needs."

"Aw, go along wid ye!" exclaimed Micky, who

could talk Irish better than he could German by a good deal. "Maybe ye're thinkin' ye can bluff old Dutchy here into belavin' that you know yer business, but ye can't bluff the likes of us! Sure, an' would we have brought th' skinny baste back into town wid us if we'd been after wantin' to kape him, an' go into the horse-racin' business? Use yer ould head fer thinkin'—not just to let yer hair grow on."

Fatty made a sudden grab for Micky, but Micky was too quick for him.

"Arrah, go inter yer back yard an' chase th' hop-toads!" he continued. "Maybe you might catch wan iv them if ye kept at it long enough."

The grocer had been thinking deeply all this time.

"Yes, dis iss der horse, all right," he said slowly. "But vere iss der vagon—und vere iss Chimmy, vat vas drivin' der vagon?"

Just at that very moment a thin man, with his coat torn and his head all bandaged up, came limping along the street.

"Vy, here iss Chimmy alreatty yet!" exclaimed the proprietor of the International Eureka Grocery Emporium. "Vat vas happen, Chimmy?"

"Horse ran away and smashed the wagon into a telegraph pole," answered "Chimmy" shortly.

"Threw me out into the road and cut my head for me! It's a born wonder I wasn't killed entirely. It knocked me clean out, but some kids that were coming along the road brought me to and fixed up the cut on my head for me. Don't know what became of the horse—— Why, there he is!" he finished, catching sight of the old brute for the first time. "What's the skinny cop doing?"

"Dese poys vas stealing mein horse, und der kind officer stopped them und brought der horse pack."

"Aw, stealin' yer grandmother!" said Micky again. "We chased your blamed old skate half a mile through the woods before we caught him—and this is all the thanks we get! Next time we'll let him run clear to Jericho and back, before we stop him!"

"That's right," exclaimed the grocer's man, "I remember seeing a crowd of boys ahead of me on the road, just before I struck the pole. Four of them fixed me up and helped me drag the wagon to the nearest repair shop; and they said that the rest were off chasing the horse."

At last the German seemed to get it part way through his skull.

"You vas goot poys," he said. "I vill gif you a reward for pringing pack mein horse, yet!"

He fumbled in his inside coat pocket until he had lugged out a fat, dirty, leather wallet, with a thick rubber band around it. He opened this slowly, took out a roll of bills, which were even dirtier than the wallet, and thumbed them over. Finally he drew out a one-dollar bill, looked at it, counted us carefully with his forefinger, and then put the bill back in the roll again.

"No; dot iss too much moneys!" he said to himself.

Next he fished in his trousers pocket and brought out a half-dollar.

"There, poys!" he exclaimed, in a tone as if he thought he was being awfully generous. "You vas goot poys! Take dot und buy yourselfs some candies!"

Like an idiot Laddie Thayer was just reaching out his hand for it when Micky shoved him aside.

"We're Boy Scouts!" he explained to the grocer. "We don't take rewards for doing a Good Turn. It's more than the skinny old brute is worth, anyhow. Come along, fellows!"

He started off up the street, and the rest of us followed without waiting to see what happened to the policeman or the fifty cents.

"Some guys are too mean to live!" remarked Micky to me.

"Just the same, you broke the Scout Law about a Scout being courteous," I answered.

"Aw, the old Dutchman didn't even know I was guying him, so what's the difference?" returned Micky. "A fellow's got to have a little fun once in a while. Besides he wouldn't have understood me if I'd talked American."

We found the First Patrol waiting for us in front of the Club House when we got back.

"You're nice Boy Scouts, you are!" said Malcolm Graham indignantly. "We waited up on the hill half an hour and then we hunted all over and couldn't find you anywhere. What under the sun happened to you?"

"Aw, we were doing a Good Turn!" replied Micky. "We returned a horse valued at fifty cents to the International Eureka Grocery Company."

CHAPTER VII

THE THANKSGIVING DAY GAME

PHIL ELLIOTT was one of those fellows who always want to be at the head of everything. He had a dandy build for athletics, and was very good-looking, with black hair and black eyes. He knew it, too. He had always been a leader among his crowd, and I guess he felt pretty much surprised when Frank had picked Irving Watson for Temporary Patrol Leader, instead of himself.

Irving was a somewhat smaller and quieter fellow, light-haired, and with a few freckles. He was fairly good-looking, too, but he wasn't really handsome the way Phil was. He didn't have a swelled head, though, and he wasn't always trying to show off somehow, like Phil. He went with the same crowd, and I guess the two were really sort of rivals, because the other fellows didn't seem to care very much for the way Phil tried to boss them around, and I guess they really liked Irving better. Phil was one of those fellows,

though, who make everybody like them, whether they want to or not; and besides he was the best athlete in the crowd—in running, or swimming, or fighting, or wrestling, or anything else. He was a little bit older than Irving, too, and, of course, that gave him an advantage.

Anyhow, until the day Frank talked to him after the football game with the Loyal Knights, it looked to me as though the choice for the Permanent Patrol Leadership would lie between those two fellows; and even now, from Phil's having stayed in the Troop, I was pretty sure that he couldn't be really out of the running. It wasn't like him to do that sort of thing; and, while I knew Frank didn't often change his mind, I thought perhaps he had agreed to give Phil another chance, after all. Any fellow is liable to lose his head once in a while, if he is any sort of a fellow at all.

I couldn't see how anyone else in the Patrol really had a show. Sandy McLean might have stood a pretty fair chance, if he hadn't had Irving and probably Phil to buck up against. Laddie Thayer and Floyd Pearce were nice enough little kids. They were both good-natured and obliging and very sincere and interested in things, but they didn't push themselves forward much,

and besides Frank had said that he wouldn't pick anybody for Patrol Leader unless he were fitted for the job; and neither Floyd nor Laddie were natural-born leaders. They were too good-natured and modest and bashful. Dunk McLean was the youngest fellow in the Troop, so of course he couldn't be considered seriously, while as for Micky McCarthy I didn't know quite what to think. At first I was pretty sure that, on account of his being really nothing but a tough, he wouldn't stand a ghost of a chance; but, after I saw how good he was at football and as Assistant Patrol Leader, and how he seemed to be more in earnest than some of the other fellows, I wasn't quite so sure. Even at that, though, it didn't look as though he stood a chance against Phil and Irving, or even Sandy. As for myself, I didn't know whether being Frank's cousin would help me or not; and I decided that all I could do was to *do my best* and let things work out for themselves.

Our football game with Troop Two came off in fine style. It was held at the athletic field of the High School, and the wooden grandstands were all packed full—partly because it was for the benefit of the hospital, and partly, I guess, because people had heard so much about Scout work by this time that they wanted to see how we behaved

ourselves. We showed them, too, because the fellows of both Troops who weren't going to actually take part in the game, acted as ushers, took tickets, did police duty—like preventing smoking in the grandstand on account of the danger from fire—or were helpful in various other ways. Just before the game was to start, we gave an exhibition of wig-wag signaling and first aid work that brought a lot of cheers from the people.

The game itself was a corker! Mr. Stead, the Scout Master of Troop Two, was the physical director of the High School, besides being a college man, so he knew just as much about athletics and coaching as Frank did, and perhaps a little more. Troop Two showed by the way they played the game that they had been properly coached. It was quite a different thing against them from what it had been against the Loyal Knights—although so far as weight was concerned the advantage was very slightly in our favor in the backfield. Playing an actual game against the Loyal Knights had given us a slight advantage in team experience also; but then some of Troop Two's fellows were either regulars or subs on the High School team, so that about evened it up.

Early in the game Phil Elliott broke through Troop Two's line, and tackled the man with the

ball so hard that he dropped it and it rolled clear of the crowd. Phil was on it like a flash, and he had it in his arms and was off down the field with it before the other team seemed to know what was happening. But their quarterback happened to be lying a little behind the line after having passed the ball, and he made a fine flying dive for Phil. He didn't quite get him, but he managed to upset him, and Phil came down pretty hard on the field. He was up again in a second, though, and started off for the goal once more.

The delay had been just enough for some of the other fellows on Troop Two's team to wake up a little and to be almost on him when he got up; and of course they chased after him just as hard as they could dig. Phil had a lead of about three yards, however, and he was an awfully fast runner besides, so at first he more than held his own.

One of the Troop Two fellows was a big, powerful, husky brute, and what he didn't have in speed he made up for in determination. He outdistanced all the rest of his team, and kept drawing nearer and nearer to Phil.

Something or other seemed to be the matter with Phil, anyway! In the first place, he wasn't running quite as fast as he usually did, and he seemed to be making more effort than was natural

to him. Once or twice he glanced back over his shoulder, saw that the other fellow was gaining on him, and then made a spurt that carried him farther ahead again. Only his spurts didn't last long, and then he would fall back into running in a clumsy, stumbling sort of way that was funny for him. Once, he suddenly seemed to give out altogether, and fell down in a heap, and I thought that of course the Troop Two fellow would get him. But he didn't, because he wasn't expecting anything like that, and he couldn't stop himself in time, but tripped over Phil's body and went sprawling a couple of feet in front of him.

Before the other fellow could recover himself Phil was on his feet and off for the goal once more. This time his running was even more peculiar than it had been at first. He sort of staggered, and once or twice I thought he was actually going to fall again. I supposed he was probably winded, but then I'd seen him run longer distances than that so often without getting really tired that I couldn't understand why he should be now.

The Troop Two fellow had got on his feet pretty quickly, also, and was close behind Phil once more. Phil glanced over his shoulder again, saw him, and appeared to hesitate a little; and for a moment I almost thought he had lost his

nerve and was going to give up. But he didn't! He kept right on, although he was wabbling from side to side, and seemed to be running with great difficulty.

The other fellow must have been sort of jarred by his fall, for he wasn't running easily, either; and, even though Phil had slowed down so much, he couldn't seem able to get near enough to make a flying tackle.

Phil was about on the ten-yard line by this time; and I knew he would make a touchdown if he could only hold out a little longer. But, just before he reached the goal line, he stumbled and fell again; and this time the Troop Two fellow got him. Or, at least, he didn't exactly get him; he just simply fell on top of him, and Phil made a last effort and managed to wriggle forward the two or three feet between himself and the goal line, and just got the ball over for a touchdown. After that, he sort of collapsed flat on his back, and lay there motionless, even when the referee had called it a touchdown, and the Troop Two fellow had gotten up, and the rest of the teams had gathered round.

Then Frank and Mr. Stead rushed out on the field; and a moment later two of the fellows came out of the group carrying Phil between them. He

didn't even wiggle, and I knew something must be wrong, because it isn't very easy to knock Phil out. But this time he had been, and I don't know that you can blame him much, either, because, when he had made the tackle which had given him the ball he had wrenched his ankle somehow, and had run more than half the length of the field on an ankle that most fellows wouldn't care to limp twenty feet on.

After this there was a delay of about five minutes before the game went on, and for the rest of the quarter the two teams played about evenly, first one getting the ball and losing it on downs or punting, and then the other. We missed Phil from the line-up, though, and Troop Two kept the ball down at our end of the field most of the time. Whenever they got really dangerous, however, we took the ball away from them on downs, although at one time we were only three yards away from our own goal line when we did it; and when the whistle blew for the end of the second quarter, Troop Two had the ball on our four-yard line for the first down.

It looked as though things might be pretty bad for us in the next quarter, but Frank must have given the fellows a good, solid talking-to in the meantime, for, when they came out on the field

again, they played like a new team, and rushed the ball to Troop Two's twenty-five-yard line before Troop Two knew what was happening.

Then Irving Watson had to go and fumble the ball, and one of the Second Troop fellows rushed it back to our thirty-yard line before Micky McCarthy downed him. That was where we missed Phil especially, because he was the best man on the team when it came to blocking off end runs or trick plays. But when Troop Two got the ball as near our twenty-five-yard line they made the mistake of trying plunges and mass plays, instead of end runs, and we held them until they had about three yards to go on the last down.

I saw their fullback fall behind his usual position, and I thought at first another trick play was coming. But, instead, they tried a drop-kick for the goal, and, of course, at that distance they couldn't very well help making it.

That changed the score to 6-3 (in our favor still), and the score was the same when the game ended; although at one time it looked as though Troop Two was surely going to make a touchdown and beat us. They had managed to bring the ball all the way from their own twenty-yard line to our five-yard mark—and then all of a sud-

den our fellows took a big brace and held like two or three stone walls.

I couldn't guess the reason for this sudden change at first, and then I saw that Phil, with his ankle all bandaged up, had come out on the side lines, leaning on a cane. I suppose that made the fellows on the team feel that it wouldn't be right to Phil for them to lose the game after all he had done. Anyhow, they held Troop Two for downs, and were carrying the ball slowly to the other end of the field when the whistle blew for the end of the game.

Just as the people were getting up from their seats and commencing to leave the grandstand, I noticed a thin curl of smoke coming from the farther end. I knew that, even if the wooden stand caught fire, it couldn't spread fast enough to cause any danger to the audience before they had plenty of time to get out, so there was no need of worrying about that part of it. Of course, though, there was no use in letting the fire do any damage to the stand itself; so I spoke to a couple of the fellows in a whisper, so that the crowd wouldn't overhear what I was saying, and we started off at a jog trot to put the fire out.

We had hardly gone twenty feet, however, when somebody in the crowd noticed the smoke,

and, like an idiot, set up a cry of "Fire!" In an instant, almost, the entire grandstand was in a panic. People tried to climb over the four-foot board fence which separated the grandstand from the field, or rushed for the narrow entrance at the nearer end of the stand. It was only wide enough for two, or possibly three, people to go out abreast, so you can imagine what happened when several hundred tried to get through at once. I've seen people trying to get off a crowded excursion boat in a hurry, but it wasn't anything like the way this mob pushed and struggled and jammed.

Suddenly Frank's voice rose above the shouting and screaming of the mob.

"Scouts Jenkins, Sanders, and Ewing, come back here with your staves, quick!" he called sharply.

We were the only fellows in our Troop who had their staves with them, because the others were still in their football uniforms and had left their sticks in the dressing-room.

Of course we hurried back just as fast as we could to find Frank standing in front of the entrance and trying to keep the people from crushing through and hurting themselves.

"Go back and sit down!" he roared at them.

"There's no danger so long as you don't act like idiots!"

As soon as he saw us, he yelled to us to come over to him quickly.

"Hold your staves horizontally across that entrance, and don't let anybody get through!" he cried. Then he threw his own body into the struggling mass of people, who were trying to get through the opening, and managed to hold them back long enough for Buck Ewing and myself to get our staves in position.

"Back them up, the rest of you fellows!" he shouted.

The two teams had just come off the field by this time, and about a dozen or more fellows hurried up and pushed against Buck and myself for all they were worth, so that the pressure of the crowd wouldn't force us away. I never came so near having the breath squeezed out of me as I did that time. But Buck and I stuck it out. We couldn't have gotten away if we had wanted to, anyhow.

Frank was still in front of us, being jammed against our staves by the crowd, and he was still shouting to them to go back and sit down quietly; that there was no danger; and that the fire was out. This last wasn't quite true, of course, but

this was one of the few occasions when it is not only excusable but even necessary to tell a lie.

It didn't quiet the mob any, though, and one man in the front of the crowd shouted something and raised his fist to strike Frank. Before he could do it, though, another man—a tall, well-dressed, athletic-looking man, of about forty or forty-five, who had been telling the crowd to go back and sit down, just as Frank had—forced his way between a couple of others, caught the first man's arm, and then gave him a smashing blow in the face.

"The next man who tries to get past me will get the same!" he cried in a voice that could be heard all over the field. "Go back and sit down, you crazy fools! There's no danger!"

Just then some of the fellows of both troops, who had rushed down to the other end of the stand, when they saw what the trouble was, came running back again.

"The fire's out! The fire's out!" they shouted.

Then the people began to come back to their senses, and most of them either went back and sat down, or stopped pushing and trying to get through the narrow entrance. When the panic was really over, Frank told us to take away our staves and leave the opening clear, and then he

allowed the people to file out in an orderly way, until the stand was pretty well emptied. Several women had fainted, and one or two people had either been knocked down and trampled upon in the rush, or been jammed up against the seats or the posts which held up the roof so hard that they had been hurt more or less; and the fellows of both Troops did what First Aid work they could. Fortunately nobody had been injured badly enough to make it necessary to call an ambulance; but, if the panic hadn't been stopped as soon as it was, there almost certainly would have been.

Frank had had his hands full struggling with the crowd in front of our staves, and, if it hadn't been for the man who came to his rescue, he would probably have been pretty well banged up. As it was, he didn't seem to feel any too happy.

"Do any of you happen to know that man who helped me out?" he asked, after the team had finished dressing and we were all on the way home again.

"Yes, sir; I do," answered Laddie Thayer. "He's a Mr. Miller, who owns one of the big places along Broadway. He's awfully rich—must be worth nearly a thousand dollars, I guess."

Frank smiled at something or other.

"Anyhow, he gave you fellows a good illustra-

tion of what it means to *be prepared,*" he went on. "He knew what to do; he was able to do it, and he did it! That's a practical lesson in the principle of Scout work for you!"

"It was rather lucky for you that he was there, wasn't it, Mr. Hall?" asked somebody.

"Yes, but I guess I'd have managed, anyway," replied Frank. "I was prepared myself! I saw what was coming and I was all ready to dodge and give the fellow back as good as he sent. I don't believe I could have done up the job quite as well as Mr.—Mr.—Miller, though!"

CHAPTER VIII

TRACKING IN THE SNOW

RIGHT after Thanksgiving the cold weather began to set in; but up to the middle of December there hadn't been any snow except for a couple of little flurries which didn't count. One morning, though, when I woke up I found the ground covered pretty deep, and more snow coming down just as fast as it could come. By night-time there must have been over a foot, and in some places it had drifted lots deeper. I was afraid this was going to spoil all our Scouting fun out-of-doors, but Frank only laughed at me.

"You don't suppose that Boy Scouts let a little thing like snow bother them, do you?" he asked. "You can have more fun now than you did before!"

And we did, too!

As soon as the snow had kind of settled down a little, so that it wasn't really deep, we got up all sorts of stunts.

For example, one Patrol would go off into the

woods somewhere and build a snow fort; and the other Patrol would try to find them before they got it finished. The first Patrol was given half an hour's start, and wouldn't have to tell what part of the country they were going to. Then, of course, the other Patrol wouldn't be able to track them by their footprints, but would have to send out scouting parties in every direction and signal to each other by wig-wag if they thought they were on the right trail.

The first Patrol would have to pick some place which was pretty well hidden by trees, or the other Patrol would spot them simply by climbing some hill, where they could see all over the country. If the first Patrol got the fort finished without being discovered, they would light a big fire to warm themselves by; and then, of course, the smoke would give them away right off.

After that the first Patrol would post pickets all around near the fort, and the fellows in the other Patrol would try to creep up without being seen. If a picket saw one of them before he got within fifty feet, the other fellow was out of it; but if he got nearer than that he was safe.

When any of their pickets gave the alarm, all the first Patrol would make a rush into the fort, while the other Patrol would wait until every one

of their fellows was on hand, and then try to take the fort by storm. If a fellow in either Patrol got hit by a snowball before the attacking party made their final rush, he was out of it; but after the attackers were within ten feet of the fort nobody was allowed to fire any more snowballs.

The attacking Patrol would try to tear the fort down, or break openings in it, or climb over the walls and drive the defending Patrol out—and, of course, the defenders would *do their best* to prevent them. If one fellow got another down he was out of it.

One of the favorite tricks of the defending Patrol was to have big masses of snow on top of the walls of the fort, and then topple them over on the attacking party, when they came near enough; and this generally discouraged them a little. Both Patrols were allowed to fire big chunks, or loosely packed balls of snow at each other, but no regular snowballs at such short range. If a fellow was knocked down by the snow, or ran away more than five feet, he was considered "dead."

We used to call it the "Mexican War." The fellows in the fort were Mexicans, defending one of their towns; while the attacking party was the American. Of course the Americans nearly al-

ways won, because they wouldn't give up until they had to, or until they were all "dead." The First and Second Patrols used to take turns in attacking and defending, naturally; and it certainly was barrels of fun.

Then another thing we did was for one Patrol to go off on a long hike through the woods and make all kinds of marks and symbols in the snow or on the trunks of trees—each symbol having a distinct meaning, or message, of course. Then the next afternoon the other Patrol would follow the trail of the first, and see how many they could spot and understand, or follow out, if they gave any directions. The game was for the first Patrol to see how many symbols they could make which the other didn't spot; and of course the two Patrols would take turns at that, too.

One time, when our Patrol was making the trail, we came across a sort of ravine, or hollow, with a good-sized tree trunk lying across it. Only it looked pretty icy, and we walked around it instead of trying to cross over.

Then a couple of the fellows had an idea. They sprinkled snow on top of the trunk, and one of the Patrol who just happened to be wearing arctics took them off and made prints on the snow of the tree trunk, so that it looked as though we

had crossed over on it. Then we covered up our other tracks, so that nobody would be apt to notice them unless they looked very carefully; and when the First Patrol followed up our trail the next afternoon, we hid in some bushes nearby to see what happened.

The scheme worked great, because with the other marks covered up it looked like a perfectly straight trail across the tree trunk and on into the woods. There was room for six or seven fellows at a time on the bridge, and it just happened that most of the fellows in the First Patrol were on it before anybody slipped. But when they did start slipping they all seemed to go down in a bunch! The ravine was only three or four feet deep and there were no rocks or anything of that sort which it might hurt a fellow to fall on, of course.

It was so funny that we all came out of our hiding-place and stood there laughing at them. We couldn't help it! But it really was a sort of mean trick and Frank was rather angry about it at first—he had been one of those on the log, for one thing—and he let the First Patrol choose the punishment we would have to take for doing it. They decided that we would have to try to cross over on the tree trunk ourselves! So we did. Micky McCarthy somehow managed to get across safely,

but he was the only one; and then they made him cross back again, and this time he fell off right square in the middle. So we didn't really gain much by it after all. But it was great sport!

One day we actually had an adventure. Frank had suggested that instead of one Patrol making a trail for the other to follow, one fellow from the Patrol should make one, and the rest try to track him half an hour later. The one who made the trail could go anywhere he pleased, but he had to tell what road he was going to start along, and in which direction—and then it was up to the rest of us to find out where he branched off from the road, and follow him up until we either caught him or he got back home ahead of us. He was supposed to do all that he could to make the trail hard to follow; and, as the snow was almost entirely worn away in places by this time, it wasn't such a cinch as you might possibly imagine.

Our Patrol was the first to try the game, and Dunk McLean made the trail for us. We came near being fooled right at the start, because, after following the road for about half a mile, we saw what we thought were his footprints branching off toward the woods; and we started off at Scout's pace along the trail. But Frank called us back.

"How do you know those are Duncan's tracks?" he asked.

(He always called us by our real first names, instead of our nicknames, and everybody in the Troop except myself called him "Mr. Hall," or "Sir." He let me keep on calling him "Frank," because I was his cousin, but none of the other fellows were allowed to.)

Well, when it came right down to it, we didn't really know that they were Dunk's footprints, although we had studied the tracks made by his shoes before starting off; but these looked as though they might be, and it was about time for him to be branching off from the road, anyhow. But Frank stooped over and felt them with his finger.

"These aren't his footprints!" he exclaimed. "The snow is frozen over, and his wouldn't have had time to do that. You fellows want to use your heads a little, and not just take things for granted."

A little farther along we came upon Dunk's real trail, and we followed it along through the woods. He had done everything he could think of to make us lose it. In one place he had walked along the bed of a brook, but luckily the brook was nearly dry where it wasn't frozen over, and

we didn't get our feet wet. Besides, we didn't have to go very far before his trail branched off into the woods again.

In another place his trail just stopped right off short; and the only way we got it again was by hunting around in circles until we found it, about twelve or fifteen yards away. The end of the trail was right beneath the branch of a large tree, and Dunk must have pulled himself up on it and climbed around until he was able to drop down on some bare rocks close at hand and follow them as far as he could go. I guess he thought he was going to lose us that time sure, but he didn't!

By this time he had struck into a part of the woods with which none of us were familiar—and then suddenly his trail came to a stop again right at the mouth of a large cave which none of us had ever seen before. It was a whopping big fellow, high enough for you to walk right in without stooping, and as black as pitch. We could hear a funny kind of gurgling noise inside, too, but we knew it couldn't be a bear or a wolf, or Dunk wouldn't have gone in.

Well, of course we had him treed at last, so we yelled for him to come out—but he didn't come. Then Frank called in to him, but there was still no answer—only that strange gurgling noise. Next,

Frank asked if any of us had any matches—he said he'd lost his on the way somehow—but none of us had. That shows we hadn't learned to live up to the Scout motto, "Be Prepared." We didn't know how to make a fire by rubbing two sticks of wood together at that time, either.

Finally Frank announced that he was going inside the cave to find out what was wrong with Dunk. We'd looked all around for more of his tracks, to make sure he wasn't just fooling us again somehow, but, as we hadn't been able to find any, we knew he must be inside the cave, and that something serious had probably happened to him.

Frank disappeared into the blackness, and then we heard him give a sort of a cry. After that there was a sound, like something falling heavily; and then everything was still once more—everything except that strange gurgling noise. My, but we were scared! We didn't know what was in the cave, or what had happened to Frank and Dunk; and none of us had the nerve to go in there in the pitch dark to find out. Besides, if Frank hadn't been able to protect himself against whatever it was, we knew pretty well that none of us could.

That was really the most awful moment I've ever had in my life! I knew we had to do some-

thing, and do it pretty quick, and I was scared to death to think of all the awful things that might have happened to Frank and Dunk. The cave was so dark we couldn't see any distance at all inside it; and I don't know what we would have done if Laddie Thayer hadn't just happened to notice a man going through the woods a couple of hundred yards away. We knew it must be a tramp, and ordinarily we'd have tried to steer clear of him, but, as it was, Irving Watson, being the Patrol Leader, told Laddie to go over and ask him for some matches. If we had some matches, of course, we could light a fire and see farther inside the cave.

Well, Laddie went off at a run, and pretty soon he returned with one single, solitary match! He said it was all the man would give him.

Irving Watson and one or two of the other fellows had practiced the Second-class Scout requirement of lighting a fire with two matches and without using any paper; but, of course, none of us had ever supposed that we might really need to be able to do it. The rest of us hustled around and got a pile of dry twigs and sticks and shavings, which we cut from the inside of logs or large branches; and then Irving bent down to light the fire with his one match!

I guess we all realized how much depended upon it, and we held our breaths for fear the match might blow out, or that Irving's hand would shake so much he couldn't hold it steady enough for the flame to catch. But there didn't happen to be much of any wind, and Irving's hand was as steady as they make them. In a second the blaze had caught, and soon the whole fire was blazing brightly.

Of course we kept feeding it dry sticks, so that it wouldn't die down; and then Sandy McLean and I had a scrap about who should go into the cave first. I thought I ought to, because Frank was my cousin; but Sandy said he didn't care if he was—that Dunk was his *brother,* and that counted for more. Finally we decided to go in together.

The fire had been built as near to the mouth of the cave as we could have it without the smoke blowing into the opening, and it was burning so brightly that it really lighted up the inside a good deal. But even at that, it was rather dim and wavering, with all sorts of queer shadows.

Sandy and I went in very slowly and carefully, so as to *be prepared* to turn around and dash out again if we had to; and before we had gone more than fifteen or twenty feet we saw what must have happened.

There was a sharp, jagged ledge of rock hanging down all of a sudden from the ceiling of the cave; and anybody going into it in the dark and not stooping very low would be pretty certain to bang his head against it. Then the floor of the cave took a sudden sharp slope downward, just at that point, and the snow had drifted in, making it slippery, so that whoever banged his head would be pretty sure to fall and slide down the slope to wherever it led to.

It wasn't either too steep or too slippery to walk on, however, if you knew that it was there; so Sandy and I picked our way along carefully, feeling before us with our staves. But all of a sudden our staves didn't touch rock any more, and we knew that we must be right on the edge of a precipice, and that Dunk and Frank were probably lying unconscious at the bottom—wherever that was.

We hadn't any ropes to lower ourselves with, of course, but Sandy wanted me to let him down on the end of his staff until he could see whether he was able to touch bottom. I told him I thought I ought to be the one to go, because I was a little lighter and he had more strength than I did to hold on to the staff at the upper end; and finally he agreed to it. I could see that he wanted aw-

fully to be the one, though, and I guess he must really have cared something for Dunk after all—though they used to scrap like the dickens sometimes.

It felt awfully funny, to be hanging over the edge of that precipice in pitch-black darkness, not knowing whether I'd be able to touch bottom, or get back again if I couldn't; and then, besides, I was afraid that my weight might possibly pull Sandy over after me. But I heard him call out to some of the fellows to come in and hold his feet, so I knew I didn't need to worry any more about that.

I kept going down and down, but there didn't seem to be any bottom to strike; and I was almost at the end of the staff when I could just feel the point of a rock under the tip of my shoe. I didn't know whether it was really bottom, or just some projecting ledge, and I called out to Sandy to lean further over, if he could, so as to give me more staff. I only had hold of the very end of it by this time, and I was afraid that at any moment I might lose my grip and fall. But I didn't, and Sandy managed to lean far enough over the brink of the precipice for me to get a good firm footing on the rock, without having to pull my arms off to keep hold of the staff. I was even able to feel

around a little with my foot, and I soon discovered that I actually was on the bottom; and then I began feeling around for the bodies of Frank and Duncan, which I knew must be there some place.

The peculiar gurgling noise had grown louder and louder, as Sandy and I went into the cave, and especially as I was being lowered over the precipice; and now I could hear it more plainly, and guessed that it must be caused by some sort of underground brook, which was running along the bottom of the cave.

It was an awful spooky feeling to be groping around there in the inky darkness—for, of course, none of the light from the bonfire reached down where I was—and when I really did touch a body it scared me so that I nearly jumped to the top of the precipice again.

I could tell that it was Dunk by the size, and by the kind of hair he had, and then I began to wonder how I was going to get either him or myself out. I hadn't thought of this before. Fortunately, I discovered that the bottom was higher in some places than others, and that farther along I could get a good grip on the staff without even having to stretch; and I shouted to Sandy to shift over a little. Then I dragged Dunk over to where I wanted him and got him on my shoulder with

the fireman's lift, leaving my right arm free to grab the staff.

I managed somehow to draw myself up, so as to get a grip on it with my knees, too; and then I yelled to the fellows above to pull me up. It seemed to me they were awfully slow in doing it, though, and before we were anywhere near the top I thought I wouldn't be able to hang on any longer. But I thought of the Scout Law about trustworthiness and bravery, and I made up my mind not to let go until I had to. A last I saw a faint glimmer of light above me, and then some one reached over and grabbed my coat collar. This made it easier for me to hang on, and in another moment we were both hauled up and dumped on the floor of the cave.

As soon as I knew I could let go safely you can bet I did it, and I just dropped on the ground and lay there in a heap, with everything sort of whirling round me. But one of the fellows loosened the Scout uniform at my throat and rubbed my face and chest with snow; and that and the cold air soon brought me around again all right. Then I had them lower me a second time, so that I could get Frank, but first I told them to cut a deep notch in the end of the staff, because I knew I couldn't carry Frank out with the fireman's lift,

and so I thought of another way. Frank had told us often enough to use our heads, and this seemed to me like a good time for it.

What I did was to take Frank's necktie off and tie his hands to the end of the staff with it. The notch kept it from slipping off. Then I stood underneath and tried to prevent his hitting against the rock on his way up. His hands got bruised a little, though.

Of course it was easy enough for me to be helped out again, and then we all began examining Frank and Duncan to see how badly they had been hurt. They were unconscious, all right, for they didn't even groan. Both of them had fairly bad cuts on their heads, but for a wonder no arms or legs or anything were broken, and we soon brought them to and bandaged up their heads, and then made stretchers out of our coats and staves and carried them back to town. It must have been nearly three miles, and it seemed like thirty. Frank *weighed* something.

On the way back he happened to notice that his wrists had been cut into a good deal where I had tied the necktie around, and especially where the knot had pressed against them.

"How did this happen?" he inquired.

I told him what I had done, of course rather

expecting him to praise me a little for it. Instead he asked:

"What sort of a knot did you use?"

I had merely tied an ordinary double, or perhaps triple, knot and I told him so. Frank grunted.

"What do you fellows suppose is the good of having to learn to tie four different varieties of knots as one of the Tenderfoot requirements, if you never use them?" he demanded. "If you had tied the right kind of knot, my wrists wouldn't have got all chewed up this way! You fellows want to use your heads once in a while!"

Well, the thing made an awful rumpus when it became generally known (for, of course, Frank made us tell all about it). It nearly broke up the Troop. The mothers and fathers of the different fellows weren't going to let them do any more Scout work at first; but Frank went around and talked to them all personally, and showed them that this had just been an accident, due to carelessness on his part, and that he would take very good care to see that nothing like it had a chance to happen again; and that real Scout work was too valuable to be dropped just on account of it.

They thought it over a little while, and finally

they all agreed to let us stay in the Troop, provided we agreed to give our attention to doing real Scout work thoroughly, instead of going off on what they called "larks." They didn't seem to realize that it was just on account of doing our Scout work thoroughly that we had been able to follow Duncan's trail up to the cave and then rescue both him and Frank; or what a very serious matter it would have been if we had lost the trail or not known what to do when we got to the cave. We hadn't thought of that ourselves, at first.

CHAPTER IX

TROOP MEETINGS

BY the time February came around, we were pretty well organized as a Troop. We had a Constitution, a Presiding Officer, a Secretary and Treasurer, a Scout Scribe—which was myself—and an Assistant Scout Master. He was a Mr. Armstrong, who lived in the town, and whom Frank had induced to help him out. He said sixteen healthy boys were too much for anybody to manage alone, even in Scout work. Mr. Armstrong was a couple of years younger than Frank, and he had never been to college at all. Instead, he was studying bookkeeping or something at a business school in the afternoons, but he had evenings and Saturdays all to himself, and he told Frank that he'd rather help in Scout work than just loaf around town. He was trying to raise a mustache, but apart from that he was an awfully nice fellow, and after he once really took hold of Scout work he became just as much interested in it as Frank was; so it helped along quite a lot, and

I guess made matters considerably easier for Frank.

When the cold weather set in we had managed to get some old oil stoves to heat our Club House; and we used the money we had in the Troop treasury to buy the oil. From the beginning all the fellows who got allowances had agreed to subscribe five cents apiece every week for the treasury; and, whenever we earned any money which we didn't need for our equipment or uniforms, we were pretty apt to put that in, too—unless there was some very especial reason for our not wanting to. But we had had to spend some of it for our Troop flag, and then, after the raids on the Club House by the Loyal Knights, we had been obliged to buy more or less new stuff to fix up the things that were smashed, so that, on the whole, our treasury was more like the middle of a doughnut than anything else.

Around about the middle of the month we held a regular Troop meeting for the election of temporary Patrol Leaders—that is, fellows who were to serve until Frank picked the permanent Patrol Leaders and Assistants in June.

We hurried through the ordinary business of the Troop meeting first, and then Mr. Armstrong handed around blank slips of paper on which we

were to write the names of the fellows whom we wanted for Patrol Leader and Assistant Patrol Leader of our own Patrol. When we had done this, Mr. Armstrong collected the "ballots" and counted them, and then Frank announced the results.

The First Patrol had elected exactly the same fellows whom Frank had picked when the Troop started. That showed that his judgment was really pretty good. But, when the ballots from our Patrol were counted, it was found that Irving Watson, whom Frank had originally chosen for Leader, had only two votes, while Phil Elliott and Micky McCarthy each had three. Then Irving spoke up.

"I'll drop out of it!" he said, rather angrily. "I don't want to be Patrol Leader any more, anyhow!"

That narrowed it down to two, and then Frank said:

"Now the Patrol will ballot again for Leader, and Scouts Elliott and McCarthy will each cast blank ballots. I know neither of them would vote for himself, but one might vote for the other while the other might cast a blank ballot, instead of voting for him in return. It's fairer to have only the six other members of the Patrol vote."

So we balloted again; and this time the result was three apiece, the same as before.

"I guess I'll drop out of it, too!" said Micky. "Phil would make a better Patrol Leader than I would, and anyhow he ought to get it on account of what he did in our football game with Troop Two."

Phil jumped to his feet like a flash. His ankle was all right again by that time, of course.

"I won't take it that way," he declared. "If the rest of the Patrol want me for Leader, they've got to give me the most votes! I'm not going to let any fellow have the chance to say that I only got it because nobody else would take it! If anybody backs out it's going to be me!"

Then Frank took a hand in the matter.

"Nobody is going to back out at all," he announced. "I'm going to call for another vote, and this time it will be oral. As I call each Scout's name I want him to say out loud for whom he casts his ballot. Then, if there is still a tie, I'll appoint the Patrol Leader myself. Scout Thayer, whom do you vote for?"

"Phil Elliott," answered Laddie promptly. He'd always gone with pretty much the same crowd that Phil had, so of course he cast his ballot that way.

"One for Scout Elliott," said Frank to Mr. Armstrong, who was keeping the count on a piece of paper. "Scout Watson, for whom do you vote?"

Irving, of course, had always gone with Phil's crowd, too, so I guess he had voted for him the first two times; but now he hesitated. I suppose he was really a little bit jealous of Phil, and he probably thought this was a good chance to get even with him.

"I vote for Micky McCarthy," he said, taking care not to look in Phil's direction.

Sandy McLean and Floyd Pearce voted for Micky also; and I was rather surprised, because they knew Phil a good deal better than they did Micky, so I thought of course they'd vote for him. They told me afterwards that they cast their ballots for Micky because they thought he did his Scout work better and wasn't so fond of showing off as Phil. "Scout Elliott" began to look a little worried, but Dunk McLean voted for him—probably because Sandy had voted the other way—making it three to two in Micky's favor.

"Scout Jenkins, for whom do you cast your ballot?" asked Frank.

That meant me, and I had to stop and think a moment. I had voted for Micky the other times,

because I thought he really deserved it more than Phil did; but then I didn't much like the way Irving Watson had acted, so I thought the best thing I could do was to make it a tie vote again and leave the responsibility to Frank.

"I vote for Phil Elliott," I said.

Frank seemed to be annoyed over something or other; and I guess he was just going to pick the Patrol Leader himself, when Irving spoke up again.

"I think I'd like to change my vote," he announced.

I couldn't exactly tell whether Frank was more annoyed than he had been before, or less.

"Scout McCarthy, are you willing to release Scout Watson from his vote?" he inquired.

"Sure!" replied Micky promptly, although he didn't look especially happy about it. I don't think he really cared much one way or the other about being elected Patrol Leader, but naturally he didn't like to have Irving want to change his vote.

"Very well, Scout Watson," Frank went on. "You have been released from your previous vote. Now for whom do you wish to cast your ballot?"

"Phil Elliott," said Irving, looking as though he might possibly be a little ashamed of himself.

That gave Phil four votes to Micky's two, so of course he was Patrol Leader. Then we had a separate ballot for Assistant, and Micky got six ballots against Irving's two.

That ended the regular business before the Troop meeting, and next Frank brought up a very important question which had been left over from the time before.

The people in the town had heard so much about Scout work now that they wanted to see some of it for themselves, and Frank had suggested that it might not be a bad idea to give a Scout demonstration and entertainment in some place or other, and let people come to see it free. Then if they chose to subscribe something for our camping outfit and expenses in the summer, why they could do so.

You see, our Scout treasury was so low now that we knew that even the five cents a week, which most of us contributed, wouldn't be enough to raise all the money we would be apt to need for our camp equipment and tents, to say nothing of food and traveling expenses; and this seemed a perfectly fair and justifiable way of getting some of it.

Frank had already spoken to a few of the people about it, and they all thought it was a fine

idea and that the entertainment would be "educative" as well as interesting. One of the churches, St. John's, had even offered to let us use its Parish Hall free, if Frank could assure them that we would not do any damage or become disorderly; and Frank said he could.

At the time of our last meeting we had not known for just what date we could have the Parish Hall, and now Frank suddenly announced that he had received word that afternoon that the only time we could have it would be a week from the coming Saturday. We always held our Troop meetings on Friday evenings, so as not to interfere with getting our school lessons.

Frank never hesitated very long about anything, and as soon as he had been told that he could have the Parish Hall a week from the next day he had said right away that he'd take it.

"I could get up a good Scout demonstration in one day if I really had to," he told the church committee. "The fellows know what to do already. There's nothing they need to learn for it."

And then he had hustled around the afternoon before our Troop meeting getting announcements printed and sending advance notices to all the newspapers. That was just like Frank.

When he sprang it on us that we were billed to give a Scout demonstration and entertainment in the Parish Hall in eight short days, however, it was a little bit too sudden for most of the fellows; and they said right away that they didn't believe they could do it.

"You've *got* to do it now, whether you can or not," answered Frank. "The Hall is definitely engaged and the notices sent to the papers. We're going to show people what Boy Scouts can do when they try. Besides, there isn't anything hard about it that I can see. Why, you could go right out on the floor now and give an exhibition of wig-wag signaling and First Aid work and Tenderfoot requirements—and that's about all we'll be able to give on an indoor stage anyhow. What is there hard about it?"

When you looked at it this way there really wasn't, but I guess the idea of doing it all in public scared us a little, and we were still too much taken by surprise to see that a whole week ought to be plenty of time to get ready in.

"Now I'll tell you what I'm going to do," continued Frank cheerfully. "You are put on your mettle as Scouts. I will assign some particular thing for each fellow in the Troop to *be prepared* to do; and his one thing is all that he needs to

worry about—but he wants to be sure that he knows it perfectly. We won't have another Troop meeting until our regular one a week from to-night—twenty-four hours before the show itself—and we'll have our one and only rehearsal then. All you fellows have to do is to get whatever work I assign you down absolutely perfectly before that time. If you think you need any help on it during the week just let me know and I'll explain what you want. You ought not to need any help at all, though. It's perfectly simple Scout work which you ought to know by heart already."

Some of the fellows began whispering excitedly to themselves.

"Patrol Leaders! Bring your Patrols to order!" called out Frank. Then when everything was quiet once more he went on:

"I know I can depend upon you fellows, but if there is any good reason why any one of you really doesn't want to take part in the performance, I want him to say so now."

Of course nobody spoke; and then Frank got busy and assigned parts. Wig-wag signaling by the Myers Code he gave to me and Laddie Thayer, and Ken Preston and Floyd Pearce. All we had to do was to be able to send and receive

messages, in couples, correctly and at a fair rate of speed. For bandaging, he picked Duncan McLean and Phil Elliott; for breaking drowning grips and for resuscitation from drowning, Benny Sanders and Buck Ewing; for demonstration of the fireman's lift and other methods of carrying injured or unconscious people, Micky McCarthy and Dug Barnard; for carrying off on stretchers made from coats and staves, the same ones who had the First Aid work; for examples of physical training and setting-up exercises, Phil Elliott and Malcolm Graham; for exhibitions of knot-tying and other qualifications for the Tenderfoot badge, Tub Kent and Babe Collins (whose mother had allowed him to join the Troop, after all, and who had taken Toughy Merrill's place in the First Patrol); for illustrating the Second-Class requirements, so far as possible, Irving Watson, Micky McCarthy, and Sandy McLean. Then, besides, the whole Troop was to give demonstrations of different Scout games, such as cock-fighting, barrel-tilting, and so forth. Frank said he would arrange the program and order of events himself, and let us know what they were on Friday night.

Frank and Mr. Armstrong stayed behind in the Club House a few minutes after the meeting had ended to talk over something, and after the

rest of us had got outdoors Micky McCarthy crossed over to Irving Watson.

"That was a dirty trick to go back on a fellow the way you did," he said. "I've a good mind to punch your head off for you."

Micky was an awfully decent fellow, really, but he hadn't outgrown quite all his toughness yet, and he had a fairly quick temper anyhow.

Irving was a quiet, good-natured sort of fellow generally, but he had a temper of his own, too.

"Go ahead and try, if you think you can do it," he answered, without backing up the least bit.

Just then Frank and Mr. Armstrong came out, and Frank seemed to see right away that something was wrong.

"What's the trouble, Scout Watson?" he asked.

"Nothin'," said Irving.

Then Micky McCarthy spoke up. He may have been a little "tough," but he was never afraid to speak the truth for fear of the consequences.

"Aw, I just told him I'd knock his head off for playing such a dirty trick at the election," he explained.

Frank looked at him a moment.

"Now see here, Micky," he exclaimed. "I won't stand for any of that sort of business around

this place. I haven't got anything to say about what you fellows do outside, but when you're doing Scout work you've got to cut out anything like that. I will say, though, that you're all supposed to live up to the Scout Law all the time—not only during Troop meetings and so forth. Irving had a right to vote any way he pleased at the election, and if he wanted to change his vote that was his business and not yours. You think it over a little and maybe you'll decide that you've made a mistake."

Micky was one of those fellows who get mad quickly, but get over it just as easily. He stood still a moment and then he gave a sort of grin and stretched his hand out to Irving.

"Sure, that's right," he said. "I'm a mucker. Shake!"

Irving didn't get mad so very easily, but when he did it generally took him quite a little while to get over it. He stuck both his hands in the pockets of his Scout uniform.

"No, I won't shake!" he answered. "If you think you can punch my head off, come ahead and try some time! Maybe you'll change your mind before you get through."

Then he joined Phil Elliott and one or two other fellows and started off for home.

CHAPTER X

THE SCOUT ENTERTAINMENT

SOMEHOW it all came off just as Frank had expected on the next Friday night. Laddie Thayer, Ken Preston, Floyd Pearce, and myself had grown a little rusty on wig-wagging since the fall; but we brushed up on it until we could have sent every letter backwards by memory if we had needed to, and knew all the numerals and conventional signals besides. The other fellows in the Troop had done the same with whatever Scout work had been assigned them; and all Frank really had to do was to show us just how he wanted the things done, so that it would be in accordance with the program which he had mapped out.

The last thing before the meeting broke up, the entire Troop drilled in marching and in one or two of the setting-up exercises, and in the "circle rest" (which is done by all the fellows marching round in a closed circle and then sitting down on each others' knees at a given signal). Then

Frank told us that we were all ready for the next evening, and that the only thing we could possibly slip up on was the program and the order of the "stunts"; but that he would be on the stage with us as Scout Master of the Troop, so that he could direct all that anyway.

After we had seen how smoothly the rehearsal went off we knew we could do everything that would be expected of us the following evening—although when Frank first sprang it on us I guess none of the fellows really thought we would be able to *be prepared* in a week's time. That just shows what you can do if you try, and if you go about things in the right way!

I knew a good many people were probably coming to the entertainment, but I was really surprised, when Saturday night came, to see what a crowd there was at the Parish Hall. Every one of the regular seats was taken, and we actually had to go and borrow some camp stools from somewhere else to put in the aisles. Even then there were several men and boys standing in the back part of the Hall. One of them was Rusty Leonard.

Frank was dressed in a regulation Scout Master's uniform, with a Scout Master's arm badge on his left sleeve. He was fairly good-looking

anyhow, but the suit made him seem almost handsome.

When it was time for the show to commence he came before the curtain on the platform and made a short address about Boy Scout work in general and what it did and what it stood for, and about our Troop in particular. He used a lot of long words, like saying that the "preventative work of the Boy Scouts" could not be "tabulated," but that beyond question it was its "largest achievement." I don't believe he understood what he was saying himself!

Then he called attention to the Scout Law and the Scout Oath, especially the eleventh law, "A Scout is Clean." He said that this law "recognized the idea of environment and urged the boy to choose his companions rightly." He also said that it "considered cleanliness and dealt with the opposition to tobacco, cigarette smoking, liquor, and profanity, but covered a great deal more in its scope." He observed that the third section of the Scout Oath, "To keep myself physically strong, mentally awake, and morally straight," was intended to "keep before the boy the fact that it is his business to keep himself strong, to get for himself an education in life, and at the same time to keep himself clean in his

resolutions to himself, to others, and to his Creator."

I guess the people in the audience thought they understood what Frank was saying, even if he didn't himself, because they all applauded like mad when he had finished; and then the curtain went up for the "Demonstration of Scout Work."

We had been busy pretty nearly all day getting the stage ready, and it was fixed up to look like a sort of open place in the woods, with a real lean-to made from the branches of trees, a few imitation rocks and tree stumps and that sort of thing, and a solid green carpet on the floor to give the suggestion of grass.

The stage was empty when the curtain went up. Then our Troop Yell was heard somewhere in the distance, and then the First Patrol, with Frank as Scout Master, came running on at Scout's pace. As soon as they reached the center of the stage, Ken Preston and Floyd Pearce began sending a wig-wag message off towards the right wing of the stage. Frank explained to the audience that they were signaling to the other Patrol that they had found a good camping site and for the other Patrol to come ahead at double-quick—and added that if there was anybody in

the audience who understood the Myers Code, he would see that the message was being sent correctly.

Then Ken and Floyd pretended to catch a return message from the other Patrol; and after a while we came up on the run. Just as we were entering, Tub Kent lay still, and Duncan McLean and Phil Elliott rushed over to examine him and announced that he had cut his head and broken his left arm. Then they proceeded to put the arm in splints and bandage the head (it was all make-believe, of course, as Tub Kent had stumbled on purpose and wasn't really hurt), while Frank explained how they were doing it and why they didn't do it some other way. Next, Laddie Thayer and I sent a wig-wag call for a doctor (I don't know to whom we were supposed to be sending it, I'm sure; but none of us thought of that at the time, and I don't believe the audience did, either). Anyhow, Dunk McLean and Phil made a stretcher out of their staves and coats and carried Tub Kent off on it, breaking step as they walked so as not to jounce him.

The next thing on the program was for Benny Sanders and Buck Ewing to give an exhibition of breaking drowning grips and resuscitation from drowning; and by the time they got through

Duncan and Phil had got back, and they and Irving Watson gave a further demonstration of First Aid work—bandaging various parts of the body, showing the treatment for fainting, shock, fractures, bruises and sprains, burns and scalds; method of applying a tourniquet; demonstration of how to rescue somebody who has come in contact with a live wire; and how to put out burning clothing, either your own or somebody else's. Finally, Micky McCarthy and Dug Barnard gave exhibitions of fireman's lift, method of assisting anybody with a sprained ankle, head-and-feet carry, and chair carry, with Foxy Merrit in the "chair."

After the audience knew enough to stop applauding these "stunts," Ken Preston and Floyd Pearce crossed over to the other end of the Hall, by the entrance door, and Laddie Thayer and I sent them messages in the Myers Code by wig-wag. Frank asked any person in the audience to write down any message which he wished sent, on a piece of paper; and then he'd give it to us to send, and Ken Preston and Floyd had to write down the message as they received it. Then Frank would take it to the person who had given it to him in the first place, and ask if there were any mistakes.

Of course, Ken and Floyd had the hardest end of the bargain, but they didn't make a single mistake; and it was a pretty good demonstration that you actually *could* send messages by wig-wag, and the audience applauded a lot when we finally got through.

One of the messages we were asked to send was: "I don't believe this signaling business is practical," and it raised a big laugh when Frank read it out loud after it had been sent and received correctly. He never looked at the messages that were handed to him, but of course he could tell what they were from reading them as they were sent.

Another thing we did that made quite a hit was to send any word or letter or numeral which anybody asked for, and say out loud what the code symbol for each letter or figure was. For instance, if someone asked us to send "cat," we'd say:

"C—121; A—22; T—2; end of word—3; end of sentence—33; end of message—333."

Frank told the audience he'd let them know if we made any mistakes. But, as it happened, we didn't.

When this was over, Babe Collins and Tub Kent demonstrated or told the requirements for

the Tenderfoot badge; and then Frank had Dug Barnard take the Tenderfoot examination—Scout Oath and all—so that the audience could see what it was like.

As a natural consequence after this, Irving Watson, Micky McCarthy, and Sandy McLean demonstrated, so far as possible on the stage, the requirements for a Second-class Scout, and explained everything they were not able to demonstrate.

Then Phil Elliott and Malcolm Graham, both of whom had dandy builds, gave examples of physical training, gymnastic stunts, and setting-up exercises, and the whole Troop took part in a few of the latter and in the "circle drill."

Toward the end of the first part of the performance we were divided into squads, and had regular tournaments in the different Scout games. When the last game was over, Frank had us all repeat the Scout Law and the Scout Oath together, and then turn and salute the American flag, which was hung up at the rear of the stage. Then we all formed in line across the front of the stage, bareheaded, and sang "America." I guess we must have come somewhere near the tune, too, because we got an awful lot of applause from the audience. I thought the people

would never stop clapping and stamping their feet.

But Frank wouldn't let us be encored, although he went in front of the curtain again himself and thanked the people for their "interest and appreciation." He said he hoped he had been able to demonstrate what Scout work really was, and its "value, both to the boy and to the community," and a lot of stuff like that.

This was followed by an intermission of about ten or fifteen minutes, in the course of which the members of the Troop served ice water to anybody in the audience who wanted it, and answered any questions about Scout work which people asked, and then the second part of the performance commenced.

We hadn't known anything about this beforehand, and it was a big surprise to us. Frank and Mr. Armstrong had worked it up all by themselves; and Frank told us all to go out among the audience and look on if we wanted to, but to be sure not to get in anybody's view.

First, Mr. Armstrong, all blacked up with burnt cork to look like a coon, came on the stage, with our pet bulldog on the end of a pink ribbon. A few minutes afterward, Frank, gotten up as another coon, appeared, and they got up a dialogue something like this:

FRANK: Good mawnin', kin' frien'. What kind ob a dawg mout dat be? Am it a Mexican bulldawg or a war dawg?

MR. ARMSTRONG: Neither, Mister Man; hit am a coon dawg.

FRANK (after thinking this over a moment): Dere's somethin' what have been a-puzzlin' of me all de mawnin'. I wonder can yo' enlighten me?

MR. ARMSTRONG: What am de cause ob yo' obscuration?

FRANK (pointing with his finger): Well, hit am dis: Does yo' see dat big bright spot in de sky, right over dis yere tree?

MR. ARMSTRONG (making a telescope of his hands and squinting through them): Ah reckon Ah can dislocate it, nigger!

FRANK: Well, den, what I wants to know is dis! Am dat de sun or de moon?

MR. ARMSTRONG (after thinking carefully): Deed, an' Ah don' know, nigger. Ah's a stranger in dese here pahts mahself!

That got the audience laughing, and, after a little more conversation, Frank said:

Ah had a ve'y strange experiunce day befo' yistiday. Ah was powerful hongry, an' Ah done went to a fahm house an axed de lady would she

please be so kin' an' unconsiderate as to gib me a square meal—an' whadder yo' spec' she done handed out to me?

MR. ARMSTRONG: Deed, an' Ah don't know, nigger!

FRANK: Well, she done manipulate towa'ds me a dawg biskit an' three lumps of loaf sugah, because dey was bof square like dis (drawing in the air with his finger).

MR. ARMSTRONG: Dat sho' was a mighty strange discurrence. Did yo' take dem, nigger?

FRANK: Ah sho' did not! Ah done went an' tol' dat lady dat Ah was a light eatah, an' dat Ah was afeard de dawg biskit mout be too heavy fo' mah destitution—an' den whadder yo' think she done say?

MR. ARMSTRONG: Ah ain't got no preconception, nigger!

FRANK: Dat lady done tol' me dat if Ah was a light eatah dat Ah would fin' plenty ob light in de ebening undah de inclandestine light on de street cohnah; an' den she done shut de do' in mah face.

MR. ARMSTRONG: 'Deed an' has yo' got a do' in yo' face?

FRANK: Ah sho' has! Hit am a trap do'.

They got off a few more gags like that, which

everybody had heard a couple of hundred years before the flood, with a whole lot of local digs and hits scattered through it, and then Frank said:

"Whadder yo' spec' Ah done see as Ah was comin' along de road jes' now?

MR. ARMSTRONG: 'Deed, Ah ain't got no misunderstanding, Sambo!

FRANK: Well, den, Rastus, Ah done circumspected inte a troop of Boy Scouts.

MR. ARMSTRONG: Toyscouts? Toyscouts? What kin' ob an annymile mout dat be?

FRANK: Yo' done disrecollec' me, Rastus! Ah tell yo' Boy Scouts.

MR. ARMSTRONG: Boy Scouts? Boy Scouts? An' what am dey like? Ah ain't never heard ob dat kin' ob boy befo'!

FRANK: Go way, nigger! Ah don' circumstan' what dey am mahself, but Ah knows what dey does.

MR. ARMSTRONG: An' what does dey do, Sambo?

FRANK: Well, fo' one t'ing dey does a Good Turn ebery day. Does yo' know what a Good Turn am, Rastus?

MR. ARMSTRONG: Ah ain't never met one yit, Sambo!

FRANK: Den Ah will 'splain it to yo' benighted misunderstanding! Jes' supposin dey was a farmer what had mo' big red apples in his orchard dan he could afford to hire men to pick.

MR. ARMSTRONG: Well, an' what den, Sambo?

FRANK: Why, den if a Troop ob dese yere Boy Scouts done come along dey would pick all de apples fo' dat farmer, an' eat 'em to keep dem from spoilin'!

MR. ARMSTRONG: Yo' meanin' percolate into mah innah conscientiousness, Sambo! Ah got it!

They went on this way until the audience began to get tired of it, and then Frank started something new by saying:

"Rastus, what does yo' know about de Scout Law?"

MR. ARMSTRONG: What law am dat, Sambo? 'Pears like to me dat dey am too many laws already. What kinder t'ing am dish yere Scout Law?

FRANK: Well, hit am a law what all de Boy Scoutses has to promise on deir honah to disobey. Hit say fust dat a Scout must be trustworthy.

MR. ARMSTRONG (making believe to scratch his head): Trustworthy? What am de meanin' ob dat, Sambo?

FRANK: Ah ain' perzackly sho', Rastus, but Ah has a kinder suspicionment dat it means dat yo' mustn't tell lies, nor cheat, nor steal, nor nothin' nice like dat.

MR. ARMSTRONG: Does dey call takin' a moonlight perambulation with white folkses chickens stealin', Sambo?

FRANK: Ah reckon dey is onconsiderable enough fo' to do dat, Rastus.

MR. ARMSTRONG: Den Ah ain' nevah gwine to be a toyscout nohow.

They made fun of one or two other points in the Scout Law in the same way; and after that they gave a pretty moderately good burlesque on some of the Scout stunts we had just been doing—fireman's lift, wig-wag signaling, first aid work, and resuscitation from drowning. They did it all so cleverly that the audience simply roared with laughter.

They tried to encore them, too, but they didn't have any better luck than they had had with us; and in a couple of minutes Frank appeared in front of the curtain a third time in his Scout Master's uniform. He hadn't had time to get the burnt cork off his face, though, and he looked kind of funny—especially as his uniform showed a part of his neck which hadn't been blacked up.

He thanked the people once more for their interest in the entertainment and in Scout work; and then he told them about how we hoped to be able to go off camping in the summer, and why we were so especially hard up for funds. He explained that it was contrary to the spirit of Scout work to charge admission to an entertainment like this for the purpose of raising money for the Troop itself, but that if any persons in the audience cared to make any contribution to the camping fund for the purpose of helping us to carry our Scout work still further, they would find a box for the purpose near the door on the way out.

There was no one by the box to solicit contributions, or even to see that the money stayed where it was put; but when we looked in it we found nearly $95 there. Most of it was in change—nickels, dimes, quarters, and half-dollars—but there was one big ten-dollar bill, and two or three fives, and several twos and ones.

Altogether the entertainment was really quite a success, and the newspapers all printed fairly long accounts of it and praised us for the work we had done and also for getting the thing up on such short notice. But, of course, it was really Frank who was responsible for that.

After the audience had finally left the hall, and

while Frank and Mr. Armstrong were in the washroom trying to get off some of the burnt cork, Laddie Thayer and Irving Watson started to climb up to the roof trusses on the ceiling of the hall, just to see what it was like up there. The trusses were about fifteen feet or so above the floor, so it probably wouldn't have been a very good place to fall from; and Micky McCarthy seemed to think that it was his duty as Assistant Patrol Leader to order them back.

"Scouts Watson and Thayer, come back here where you belong!" he called out.

Laddie always was an obedient little kid, even before he became a Scout. He dropped right back on the floor—a little harder than he had expected to, I guess. But Irving kept on climbing up toward the trusses.

"You needn't think you can order me around, you big Irish mick!" he exclaimed. "You're only the Assistant Patrol Leader, anyway!"

Then he sort of glanced at Phil Elliott, as if he expected Phil to side with him against Micky. But Phil must have thought that on account of being Patrol Leader he ought to live up to it.

"Scout Watson, come down at once and report to the Scout Master as having broken the Scout laws of obedience and courtesy!" he commanded.

Irving looked kind of surprised, as if he hadn't expected that from Phil; but this time he came down. Just at that moment Frank and Mr. Armstrong came out of the washroom together. Irving hesitated a minute and then he walked up to Frank, stopped within three paces, gave the Scout salute, and told him what had happened—not even omitting what he had said to Micky.

Frank looked sort of disgusted.

"All right!" he said. "If you want to act like that toward Micky just on account of what happened the night of the election, why that's your own affair! You two can settle it between you any way you choose when you aren't in Scout uniform—only whatever you do, play fair. Any fellow can act like a mucker. Boy Scouts ought to show that they have manliness enough to live up to the Scout Law and the Scout Oath. This kind of thing doesn't help any toward the permanent Patrol leadership, either!"

CHAPTER XI

POCANTICO CREEK

ONE night, some time during the latter part of March, I wakened up all of a sudden out of a sound sleep. The first thing I was conscious of was hearing a loud peal of thunder. Then came a vivid flash of lightning, which made the room almost as bright as day—followed almost the same instant by another sharp crash that made me think something nearby must have been struck.

I was wide awake by this time, and I could hear the wind roaring outside and the rain beating against the window-pane and splashing all over the floor where I had left the window open. I don't usually wake up on account of thunderstorms, even when they are very hard ones; but this time I did, so I jumped right up and rushed over to the window to close it.

It must have been raining in for some time, because I stepped splash into a regular lake of icy cold water, and the chair on which I hung some

of my clothes had been overturned by the wind.

Just as I was about to slam the window shut, I heard something that rose even above the noise of the storm. It was three long, loud blasts on the Patrol Leader's whistle, repeated over and over, which somebody was blowing directly under my window—the alarm signal of the Troop. That must have been what wakened me.

It was too dark for me to be able to see anybody on the ground outside, but I gave the call of our Patrol to show that I had heard the alarm, and then started to get ready just as fast as I could. The alarm signal meant that every member of the Troop who heard it must hurry to the Club House as quickly as he could, no matter what time of the day (or night) it happened to be, and it had never been sounded before.

I knew I couldn't waste time by dressing in the regular way, and besides my clothes were all soaking wet from the rain, so I just put on my Scout suit—which I always hung up in the closet—right over my pajamas, and then dove into my raincoat and my Scout hat (which was waterproof), and started off.

It was pouring in sheets when I got outside, and the wind was so strong that it almost blew me over at first. I didn't stop to think about the

weather, though, but headed for the Club House just as fast as I could go against the wind. I knew something serious must be the matter, or Frank wouldn't have ordered the alarm signal to be sounded. And then I remembered that Frank couldn't possibly be the one who directed it, because he lived in a place ten miles away, and wouldn't know if anything *were* happening that it would need to be sounded for.

At the Club House I found several of the Troop already there, standing out in the rain—Phil Elliott, Micky McCarthy, Irving Watson, Buck Ewing, Laddie Thayer, and Ken Preston. The other fellows mostly lived too far away for there to have been time to send anyone around to sound the alarm signal under their windows. All of the fellows had put on their Scout suits right over their pajamas, just as I had done, and all except Micky and Phil wore raincoats.

A minute or so after I got there Duncan and Sandy McLean came tearing up, dressed in Scout suits and pajamas, just like the rest. Then Phil Elliott spoke up. He was only the Leader of the Second Patrol, instead of the first, but he was the one who had discovered the danger and had sounded the alarm signal; and now he took charge of the whole thing just as though he had been

Frank himself—and nobody stopped to argue about whether or not it was his business to. All that night we did just exactly what he ordered.

"Pocantico Creek is overflowing its banks and undermining St. John's Church!" he said hurriedly. "Our house is right near there, and the thunderstorm woke me up and I saw it! The Creek is fuller than it ever has been before, and it's overflowing and washing things away all along its shores! It's made a big cave-in in the hill that St. John's stands on, and if it gets much farther the whole church will tumble in. I don't know just what we can do, but we've got to do something and do it quick! Follow me, fellows!"

He dashed toward the street on a dead run, and all the rest of us followed him. It was dark as pitch, except when the lightning flashed; but we would have known our way blindfolded, and we didn't lose any time in getting over to the Creek.

Sure enough, it was chock full of water, which was rushing past at a tremendous rate. A fellow couldn't possibly have waded even six feet from shore. He'd have been swept off his feet and carried half a mile or so downstream before he knew what struck him.

Pocantico Creek, by the way, ran along the outskirts of the town, and on the other side of it there

was nothing much except farmhouses and open country. But on the town side it was quite thickly built along—mostly residences like Phil Elliott's, but occasionally some other kind of building, like St. John's. A short distance below Phil's it ran under the railroad tracks between a sort of stone embankment.

As we got about fifty feet away from the shore of the Creek, we suddenly heard a peculiar sliding, sucking noise, followed by a sort of boom and splash combined.

"Hurry, fellows!" shouted Phil. "There goes another cave-in!"

It was so dark we could hardly see anything at all, except when the lightning flashed, and Phil rushed into his house and got a couple of lighted lanterns. Then we took a closer view of St. John's.

At the cave-in we had heard, the hill had been undermined to within about ten feet of the rear wall of the church—it was only a frame building on some kind of stone foundation—and we could see that if it got much further the whole church might fall into the Creek and be carried off downstream, or all smashed to pieces by the floating logs and things in the Creek.

Only I didn't see how we could very well pre-

vent it! The Creek was rushing by at a tremendous rate, and we could see that it must be eating further and further into the hill all the time. But Phil must have thought it all out while he was going around sounding the alarm signal.

"There's a place upstream where the Creek flows between a lot of large rocks and trees," he said. "If we can find some way of damming it, we may be able to throw a good deal of the water in the brook off onto the farm lands on the other side—and then the current won't be strong enough here to do any more harm."

That sounded like a good enough scheme, but the thing was how to build a dam in a stream that was tearing past at the rate of the Creek. Why, an ordinary stone dam wouldn't have had a chance in it for a minute, even if it had already been built. But Phil was on his way along the bank already, and the rest of us followed without hesitating a minute. Phil may have been too fond of trying to boss things, but he was a natural-born leader when it came to any real emergency.

We all knew the spot Phil meant. It was a sort of gorge, with the walls of solid rock and several large boulders in the Creek itself. At one point the sides of the gorge were only six or seven feet apart and the rocks formed a sort of rapids

for the water to run over, and made a fairly deep pool on the upper side where we used to go swimming in summer.

But to-night I would never have recognized it. The rocks which caused the rapids were all under water, and the Creek was rushing along in a black, swirling torrent that made me almost dizzy to look at. You see, the melting snow from further back in the country had made all the brooks and rivers pretty full anyway; and then this tremendous thunderstorm, which must have lasted at least two or three hours by this time, had swollen the Creek more than it had ever been before, and it was washing away its banks, and overflowing in places, and carrying away all sorts of things.

There was just one spot where the rocks on either side showed enough above the water to count. That was just a little beyond our "swimming-hole," where the Creek was a little wider and the banks not quite so high. We used to use them to dive from or to lie on to get dry. They must have been about twelve or fifteen feet apart, and while they happened to be fairly smooth on the side toward the pool, the upstream faces were rather rough and jagged. Phil pointed to those rocks.

"That's the only place we can make a dam!" he declared.

Then he set to work chopping down a couple of young trees with his Scout hatchet, which he had brought with him when he went after the lanterns.

So far, the rest of us hadn't had much of anything to do, but now we saw what Phil was up to and we began to get busy. As soon as Phil had the trunk of a tree partly chopped through, several of us would grab hold of the branches or the trunk as high up as we could reach and pull the tree down; while Phil started work on the next one. Whenever we had pulled a tree down we would drag it over to the bank of the Creek.

After we had three or four there, Phil came over himself.

"That's enough for just now, fellows!" he said. "A couple of you take this hatchet and chop down a few more, and the rest of us will start making a dam out of these."

It would have been an easy matter just to chuck them in the Creek, of course; but the chances were that they would simply have floated on downstream without catching against the two rocks. Phil had thought of this, too.

"I'll go over to the other side and try to put

one end of the tree in position when you fellows lower it to me," he said. "Lower slowly. Don't just let it drop. And be sure that your own end doesn't get away from you!"

That was all very well as far as it went, but how was Phil going to cross the Creek? It was at least twelve feet wide at its narrowest point, and I don't believe an elephant could have stood against it at the rate it was tearing past. There was no bridge, of course.

But Phil seemed to *be prepared* for everything. He had gotten his Scout staff at the same time he went after the other things, and now he managed to plant one end as near the middle of the brook as he could without its being swept away from him, and then he gave a tremendous spring and vaulted over to the other bank of the Creek just as coolly as if he had been practicing in his own back yard.

The first tree we got hold of was a rather tall, slender one without so very many branches, and we stood it on end on our side of the Creek and tried to lower it slowly, as Phil had told us. But when we had it about halfway, the end of the trunk, on which we were standing, suddenly slipped out toward us and threw most of us over backward, and the upper part fell with a crash on

the further side of the Creek—but at an angle instead of straight across as we had intended.

It came down so fast that Phil had all he could do to save himself from being hit by it; but after it had fallen, we saw him brace himself against the rock and try to grab hold of the branches before the current had time to carry the whole tree away. But when our end had slipped and knocked us over, we had forgotten to get hold of it again in time, and it had slipped into the water. We saw that the current was about to carry it off, and we tried to grab it again—but we were just too late.

Phil had hold of his end, all right; but it was no use with one end free, and he had to let go to save himself from being dragged off the rock into the Creek. He shouted something at us, but the storm and the water made such a noise that we couldn't hear what he said.

The next tree wasn't quite so tall, but it had a good many more branches, and we made up our minds that the same mistake wasn't going to happen twice. We hunted around a little by the light of the lantern until we found a place in the rocks that we could brace the trunk of the tree against so as to keep it from slipping, as it had done before, and then we shouted to Phil that we were

going to let it fall at once. But I guess he couldn't hear us, either.

We tried to push against the trunk as the tree fell, so as to make it drop straight across; but again it went off at an angle—only this time the angle was upstream. As soon as it landed, we grabbed hold of our end quickly, and then we looked to see what was happening on Phil's side of the Creek.

That end of the tree had fallen a little upstream and some of the branches dragged in the water. This gave the current a purchase on them, and the whole thing was being swept toward the rock on which Phil was waiting for it. Our end being held fast, the whole tree couldn't possibly get caught by the current, and Phil reached out and grabbed hold of some of the branches, and then tugged at the tree until he got it in a position where the rock held it firm. The current of the Creek was pushing against it all the time, of course, so if we once got it firmly fixed at each end the water would only jam it more firmly all the time.

After we had the first tree in place, the rest was easy. The fellows with the hatchet had brought over two or three more trees by this time, and we just placed them in position between the rocks

with the branches of every alternate tree on our side of the Creek, because, of course, they were what made the best dam.

The dam worked great, too! At first it didn't seem to stop the force of the current much, but in a little while we could see that the Creek was widening out above our dam, and even though the water kept pouring through and over the trees, we had checked it enough so that it couldn't do any more damage to the church.

Instead, it overflowed its banks and spread out over some fields into a regular lake a couple of acres broad. There were no crops planted in the field at the time, though, so it didn't do much of any harm; and anyhow it was better than having the church swept away.

After we had the dam finally fixed up, Phil vaulted back across the Creek again, and then we all went back downstream to find out how the church was getting along. The hill had caved away some more in the meantime, and the foundations at one corner of the building had been undermined and a large piece of the foundation wall itself had dropped away; but the Creek was behaving itself at this particular point now, and we knew there was no danger of anything further happening.

The thunder and lightning had been working overtime all this while, and just at that moment there was an extra vivid flash. Micky McCarthy happened to be looking down the Creek towards the railroad bridge just then, and we heard him give a cry.

"Great heavens, fellows!" he shouted. "Look!"

He was pointing in the direction of the railroad bridge, but after the flash of lightning it had become inky black once more. The next instant there was another flash, sharper than the first, and then we could all see what he meant.

The railroad embankment had been washed away and the trestle over the Creek had fallen. Just at that moment we heard the whistle of a train in the distance. We looked at one another for a second.

"Good Lord!" Phil cried. "That's the three o'clock through express!"

With that he snatched up his staff and the lantern and was off.

The train was coming from the other direction, so Phil would have to cross the Creek to be able to flag it before it reached the bridge. The Creek at this point was wider than where we had built the dam, and it didn't seem as if anybody except a professional pole-vaulter could clear it.

But Phil never stopped to think of that. He ran as hard as he could towards the bank of the Creek, stuck the end of his staff on the bottom, without knowing whether it would get a good grip or not, and gave a terrific jump.

Just then it became inky black once more, and we held our breaths, almost afraid to look, when the next lightning flash came a second later. It showed us Phil still in the air over the waters of the Creek, with his grip on the very end of the staff and his arms stretched out full length. It looked as if he were going to fall short, after all, but just before he landed he gave a desperate push with his hands against the end of the staff, and made a leap through the air. His staff was whirled like a shot downstream as soon as he let go of it.

But he didn't quite reach the other side. He landed two or three feet from the shore with a tremendous splash, and I was afraid for a moment that he was going to fall flat on his face in the water and thus put out the lantern, which he had managed to keep hold of while making the leap.

Then it became dark once more, and the only way we could tell that he hadn't fallen was by seeing that the light of the lantern was still burning.

When we saw him again he had climbed up the bank on the other side of the Creek—fortunately it wasn't a very steep one—and was off for the railroad tracks just as hard as he could go. We could follow the light of the lantern bobbing up and down between the lightning flashes.

CHAPTER XII

THE THREE O'CLOCK EXPRESS

PHIL was a good runner, but I'd never known him to run before as he did that night, across the rough, muddy fields toward the railroad tracks. The engine had not whistled again, but we knew from the faintness of the sound when it had, that the train must be at least a couple of miles away. But it wouldn't take a through express train long to cover that distance if it were running at its usual speed; and while the railroad bridge was only a short distance below where we were standing, Phil would have to go along the tracks a little way or the train couldn't be stopped in time to save it.

By the time the next lightning flash came Phil had just reached the railroad embankment; and then from the way the light of the lantern bobbed we could tell that he must be running along the tracks so as to get as far from the broken trestle as possible before flagging the train with his lantern.

So far there was no sign of the train, and the wind was blowing so hard that we couldn't have heard any noise from it, unless the engine whistled again. Then suddenly we saw the bobbing light which was Phil's lantern stop stock still, and then begin to make great wide circles in the air. We knew then that Phil must have either heard or seen the train coming.

And the next instant we saw it, too! A big, wide beam of light suddenly shot out of the darkness around a curve in the track—and we knew it was the head-light of the express. Phil's light was awfully close to it—he had probably hoped to get around the curve in time to signal the train before it reached there. But there hadn't been time.

Another flash of lightning came just then, and we could see the long, black shape of the train rushing around the bend. But it was too far off for us to be able to see Phil, and his lantern didn't show in the glare of the lightning. The next second it was black again, and we saw the head-light of the engine grow wider and wider as the train came on.

But there was no sign of Phil's lantern, and then I suddenly realized that the train had passed the spot where Phil had been standing, and was

coming at full speed towards the broken trestle! It made me feel sick to think of what must have happened, and what was going to happen; and I turned away my eyes so as not to see anything more. But I heard Irving Watson call out:

"She's stopped, fellows!"

Then I turned around again, and sure enough the engine had come to a dead stop only ten or fifteen feet from the Creek, and I knew that the passengers had been saved. But what about Phil?

With the next lightning flash I saw the big train standing motionless and little black forms beginning to pour out from it which I knew must be people. A group of them went back along the track a short distance, and then stopped; and others began to drift toward them until a little crowd was formed. Then Irving Watson cried out:

"We've got to get across the Creek and over there somehow!"

It had almost stopped raining by this time, but the current in the Creek was still too strong for us to think of trying to wade across it. Then Micky McCarthy had an idea.

"Let's go up and cross over on the dam, fellows!" he suggested.

We all went back up the stream into the swim-

ming-hole. The water was still tearing through the dam at a great rate, but it wasn't very hard to cross over, because we had the branches of the trees to hang on by when we slipped or were carried off our feet. We *did* get a little wet, though.

As soon as we reached the other side we all set off on a hard run for the railroad tracks. Our dam had caused the water to flood the fields at this place, and we had to plow through mud and water almost up to our knees. It couldn't be helped, however, and finally we got on to firmer ground and were able to do some real running.

We didn't bother with the train at all, but headed straight for that part of the tracks where we had seen the little crowd of people gathering. The lightning flashes were not quite so frequent now, but they came often enough for us to be able to find our way without any trouble.

When we came to the crowd we found them all gathered in a sort of circle looking at something on the ground in the center. We knew it must be Phil, and most of us hardly dared look at first. But Micky McCarthy was only a tough, so he pushed right through them. There was silence for a couple of moments, and then Micky's voice exclaimed:

"Aw, he's all right! He's only takin' a rest! Get back and give him some air, you boobs!"

Then the rest of us pushed our way through the people and shoved them back two or three feet so that Phil would have all the air he needed. Then we formed a little circle of our own and kept the crowd back where it belonged.

Phil was lying unconscious in the arms of the engineer and fireman of the train. So far as I could see, he hadn't been hurt any except for a cut on his head, so I knew he couldn't have been struck at all by the engine. Micky and Irving Watson explained matters to the fireman and then set about giving Phil First Aid. He told me later what had happened.

He said he had hoped to get around the bend in the track before the train came along; but that while he was still a little distance off he heard the sound of the train coming, and he knew he would have to flag it from where he was. So he waved his lantern around, just as we had seen him do from the church; but he knew that the engineer wouldn't be able to see it until the train got around the bend, and he realized that he must stand on the tracks as long as he dared if the train was to be saved. So he did, and he waited until the engine had come around the bend and was almost

upon him before he jumped. He had to jump so quickly that he didn't have time to think of how he was going to land, and he fell in a heap and struck his head against a signal of some sort at the side of the track.

But the engineer had seen the signal just in time to stop the train before the trestle was reached. Then the head-light showed him what the danger had been, and he and the fireman started back up the track to see if whoever gave the signal had been hurt. After that the rest of the train crew and several of the passengers who had been awakened by the jolt when the emergency brakes were thrown on got off the car to see what the trouble was. The engineer and fireman had found Phil lying unconscious with his head bleeding, and they were attending to him and the crowd was standing around looking on and making crazy suggestions when we had come up.

Micky and Irving brought Phil to and fixed him up in no time; and then they carried him into the train and laid him in one of the Pullman car berths. We weren't going to take any chances on getting him home across the Creek.

Some of the passengers were very much excited about it all, and they called Phil a hero and a noble boy, and all that sort of stuff. You could get Phil

hopping mad for the next couple of months by calling him a "noble youth."

Then one of the men went around and took up a collection to "reward him for his bravery" in saving the train. Nearly everybody contributed, and I guess there must have been over a hundred dollars in the "reward." Only, when the man who had taken it up handed it to Phil with a neat little presentation speech about heroism and gratitude and nobility of character, and so forth, the "noble youth" wouldn't take it.

"I don't want to be paid for not being a coward and a cad!" he said. "Any halfway decent fellow would have done as much as I did."

This seemed to take the man by surprise, but he got off another neat little speech about modesty and unselfishness and virtue being its own reward, but that he and his fellow passengers insisted upon his accepting this "little testimonial of appreciation." The man himself hadn't contributed a red cent, by the way. After the man had talked himself out Phil said:

"I won't take it, just the same! I'm a Boy Scout."

The man didn't see why that made any particular difference, but Phil stuck to it, and in the end the man had to return the money to the people he

had collected it from—which seemed to make him rather unhappy for some reason.

After a while the train was backed up to the last station, and most of the people went to hotels or hired automobiles to take them over to another railroad line about five miles away which had the same terminal. Then the man who had taken up the collection for Phil came around and told us that he had just hired two large automobiles to take us all back home. Phil was a little weak and dizzy still from the injury to his head, but he said he felt well enough to make the trip, so we all piled in. It had stopped raining entirely by this time.

We didn't want to say anything about the affair at all, but somebody got curious as to how those particular fields came to be flooded and discovered our dam. Of course that gave it away. Then besides his people wanted to know about the cut on his head; and, being a Scout, Phil unfortunately had to tell them the truth.

So it all leaked out gradually, and we got a lot of praise in the papers. The minister of St. John's Church even preached a sermon about us. Most of our parents went to that particular church, too, and they couldn't seem to pile the compliments on thick enough when they came

home. I guess we would all have had bad cases of "swelled head" if it hadn't been for Frank.

"You fellows deserve a lot of credit for the way you used your heads and carried the thing out," he told us. "Phil especially for acting so quickly to flag the train and having the nerve to vault the Creek. But beyond that you only did your duty as Boy Scouts and as members of the community. Anybody ought to have been willing to do what you fellows did. It's simply that a good many people haven't got any particular nerve or sense of duty anyhow, or else wouldn't know how to act even if they wanted to. That's where the Boy Scout Motto, 'Be Prepared,' comes in, and that's just exactly what Scout work is meant for.

"Just the same, I'm proud of all the fellows who took part in it, and particularly of Phil. I've written to National Headquarters already, stating the facts of the case and asking to have an Honor Medal—which is given only for life-saving at personal risk—awarded him. Now we're going to go to work and drain out the fields you fellows flooded, and repair the damage to the church grounds and the church itself."

We did, too.

The thunderstorm that night must have used up all the rain in the sky at once, because we had

almost nothing but sunny, warm days for the rest of the month. By April it was so warm that the baseball season started up everywhere; and then one of the fellows in the Troop—it was Malcolm Graham, I think—asked Frank if he wouldn't let us get up a baseball team and coach us Saturdays.

"What makes you fellows think you can play baseball?" he inquired.

Frank, by the way, had pitched on his Freshman baseball team at college, and in his Senior year had been one of the substitute pitchers on the Varsity; so he knew something about the game and about coaching.

"We've gotten up teams before and played games with other teams on Fuller's field. It isn't so bad except for the stones and the hill. We used to have pretty good teams, too—except that nobody could pitch decently and the umpire was no good!"

Frank laughed.

"That isn't baseball," he said. "That's glorified rounders! You fellows wouldn't even know real baseball if you saw it."

"Well, you could show us something about it," returned Malcolm. "We could probably do it if we knew how."

Frank laughed some more, but in the end he

agreed to it, as I knew he would. He's awfully good-natured if you ever find it out.

There were only sixteen fellows in the Troop altogether, and some of them couldn't play baseball well enough to keep themselves warm, so Frank didn't have any too much material to build up a team with. He said, though, that the fact that none of us really knew anything about the game simplified matters considerably; and he just picked fellows at random for the different positions and then coached them for that position, instead of shifting them around at all.

Two or three of the fellows—Irving Watson, Tub Kent, and Phil Elliott (of course)—thought they could pitch; and they tried to make Frank believe that they could throw a curve. But Frank knew something about that part of the game, and after watching them throw the ball all over the lot a few times, he told them they could play any position on the team except pitcher. He asked if there was any fellow in the Troop who had never tried to pitch a curve; and when Sandy McLean and Micky McCarthy said they hadn't, Frank announced that he was going to take them in hand and develop them into pitchers for the team.

Phil Elliott he put at second base, Irving Wat-

son at short stop, and Tub Kent behind the plate. The rest of the team, as he picked it, was Malcolm Graham, first base; Dunk McLean, third base; Foxy Merrit, left field; Ken Preston, center field; and myself right field. Buck Ewing and Floyd Pearce were substitutes, just as they had been on the football team.

Having definitely picked the team, Frank gave all his attention, outside of the pitchers, to teaching each fellow how to play his position properly, what to do under different circumstances, and how to play together as a team.

"You fellows seem to have the idea that all you need to do is to field fairly well and hit the ball occasionally to win games," he told us once. "Why, any team that knew anything at all about baseball could make you look foolish. Team play and head work are what count in baseball. If you fellows will kindly get the idea into your heads that you don't know anything at all about how to play the game, and simply follow my coaching for all you are worth, I may possibly be able to turn out some sort of an apology for a team. What you have to do is to learn to play the game right and use your heads and not go 'up in the air.' I don't care anything about the fielding itself at first. That will come with practice. But you've

got to learn to play the game right and play it for all you're worth. Don't get mad and throw your glove down on the field if you, or some other fellow, makes an error. That's simply kiddishness. The error has been made and it's your job to *do your best* to make up for it and take care that it doesn't happen again."

CHAPTER XIII

THE LOYAL KNIGHTS AGAIN

OUR ball team was practicing one afternoon in the vacant lots we always used for that sort of thing when Benny Sanders and Dug Leonard, who were not obliged to report for practice, on account of not being on the team, came running up out of breath, stopped three paces from Frank, gave the Scout salute, and said:

"The Loyal Knights have got up a team, too, and they've challenged us to a game next Saturday."

Phil Elliott and Sandy McLean overheard them and let out a whoop.

"Hooray, fellows!" they shouted. "Here's where we get a chance to show them a thing or two!"

Ever since we had held them to a tie in the football game in the fall the Loyal Knights had been going around saying that it was only an accident and that if they ever got another chance at

us—in football or anything else—they would wipe up the floor with us. After the night of the thunderstorm, though, they hadn't been making fun of us so's you could notice it any more.

"What do they know about baseball?" asked Frank. "Are they as good at it as they thought they were in football?"

"Ah, they don't know nothin'!" said Phil and Sandy and Irving Watson all in the same breath.

"Well, perhaps we'll show them a few things then," remarked Frank, with a sort of grin. "It would do those fellows good to get taken down again, and it's your duty as Scouts to get rid of a Good Turn by doing it."

And he sent back word that the challenge was accepted and that the game would be played on the same field where the football game had been held.

We spent the rest of that afternoon in batting and fielding practice and team work; and Frank paid a lot of attention to Sandy McLean and Micky McCarthy, the two pitchers. Micky didn't have very much of a curve, but he had a straight ball which was so fast you couldn't see it until after it had gone by, and he also had very good control—by which I mean that he never was wild or passed most of the batters on balls. Sandy

didn't have anything like Micky's speed, but he could pitch two or three curves and he had pretty good control into the bargain; and Frank figured that between the two of them we ought to be able to give a pretty good account of ourselves against teams in our own class.

He had managed to develop the infield into a pretty fast and accurate combination, too. Irving Watson, at short stop, was naturally quick, and he always could field pretty well; but Frank had coached him a lot on how to play the position, and especially on making his throws to first sure. Lots of fellows who would be pretty good otherwise fall down on that, or else throw to first when they really should have thrown somewhere else.

Phil Elliott, at second, was a wonder. He was tall, so it was easier for the catcher to throw to him when he wanted to get a man stealing; and Frank had made him practice taking the throws from the plate until he hardly ever missed one. Consequently, Tub wasn't afraid to send the ball down to Phil when a man tried to steal from first —which is one of the chief troubles with most teams that aren't regular professionals.

Malcolm Graham was all right at first, because he had a long reach in case anybody threw wild to him; and when he got his hands on the

ball he kept them there. Dunk McLean was about as good as you need for third base. He was a little short and he muffed a good deal in fielding, but he was fairly good in taking throws and touching out the runner when he slid for the bag; and, as for the fielding, Irving took care of pretty nearly everything that came that way.

As to us fellows out in the field, we were probably nothing very wonderful, but we hardly ever missed a fly, if it came near enough, and we had learned how to back up the infielders properly when they needed it.

Frank had made us get lots of batting practice, too. He pitched for us himself, and after he had coached us for a little while he began putting some speed and curves on the ball; so we knew if we could hit his pitching once in a while we could probably run away with anything of that sort we would be apt to meet with in our part of the country.

Altogether, we had managed to learn more about baseball in two or three weeks than we had ever supposed there was to know, and we were pretty sure that the Loyal Knights would have the surprise of their lives when they bucked up against us.

We found them already on the field practicing when we got there on Saturday. Rusty Leonard was going to pitch for them (he was one of the subs on the High School team); Butter Weeks was catching; Carl Hayes played first; Toughy Merrill short stop; Sleepy Conrad third; Doc Minnerly second; and there were three other fellows out in the field.

They took their time about letting our team have the diamond for practice, but they finally decided to turn it over to us, and after ten or fifteen minutes of infield and batting practice, Frank called the game.

The Loyal Knights won the toss, so we had to take the first turn at the bat. I guess Rusty Leonard thought at first that he could scare us and make us stand away from the plate by pitching just as swift as he knew how; but after he had given three fellows bases on balls and only struck out one he changed his mind. Then he settled down to pitch curves for all he was worth, mixed in with an occasional straight ball; but we were more or less used to Frank's pitching by this time, and Rusty's was easy by comparison. We didn't get safe hits very often at that, but we bunted or got bases on balls or knocked long flies that would bring in runs from third even if they were caught;

and by the end of the first inning we had six nice, fat, juicy runs.

The Loyal Knights came to bat in their half of the inning as if they meant to knock the cover off the ball. Micky had been chosen by Frank to start the game for us, and his straight ball had more speed than even Rusty's, and the Loyal Knights couldn't seem to get their eye on it well enough to do more than make fouls or long flies or dinky little scratch hits which our infield gobbled up like pie. Micky gave a couple of bases on balls, and each time the Loyal Knight tried to steal second—and each time we nailed him a couple of feet away from the bag. That seemed to make them mad, for some reason. At the end of the inning they had made exactly one single, lonesome run—and that was the result of a wild throw by Dunk McLean when we were running a man down between third base and home.

Those fellows really never had a ghost of a show against us. We worked trick plays, like the "delayed steal" and the "squeeze play," which they didn't know anything about; and we stole second and even third about whenever we pleased. One time Micky McCarthy actually stole home while Rusty was holding the ball. That made them mad all right! Micky just sat there in the

dust and laughed at them after he slid across the plate safely.

By the third or fourth inning the score was something like 17-5 in our favor; and after that Frank told Micky to let them hit the ball squarely once in a while, so as to give us some real practice in fielding. Even then the Loyal Knights couldn't seem to get more than one or two runs an inning across the plate; while we usually got three or four. One inning we made nine! The game ended with the score 27-11 in our favor, and you never saw a more disgusted looking bunch than the Loyal Knights.

In the fifth inning the other team had managed to get a man on first and third with only one out. Rusty Leonard was at bat, and he cracked a hard grounder just a little to the left of the pitcher's box. Frank had told Micky not to try to field any balls that either Irving or Phil could reach, but Micky either forgot this or just instinctively made a dive for the ball. Irving had started for it as soon as he heard the crack of the bat, and I guess he would have gotten it all right if Micky hadn't just touched it with his hand enough to throw it out of its course.

As it was, it rolled free of them both, and Sandy McLean, who was playing third in Dunk's

place because Dunk had hurt his hand earlier in the game, dashed in, grabbed it up, and threw it to Phil at second to try to catch Toughy Merrill, who was the fellow who had been on first, and make a double play. The man who had been on third had already scored, so it was the only thing to do.

But he threw a little wild, and Phil dropped the ball. Toughy was almost at second by that time, anyhow, and when he saw what had happened he took a chance and came on for third as hard as he could tear.

After Sandy had made the throw he started to chase back to cover third, where he belonged; and after juggling with the ball a little, Phil picked it up and shot it down to where Sandy ought to have been so as to catch Toughy between bases.

Sandy hadn't quite had time to get back to his right position, and he had to make a dive into the air to get the ball at all. Just at the same moment Toughy made a jump for the bag, feet first; and he and Sandy collided just as Sandy was coming back to earth from his jump, with the ball in his glove. Naturally, he made a sweep with his left arm to touch Toughy before he slid into the base; and there was a general mix-up. Frank, who had

been umpiring the game, had rushed over towards second so as to see the play there, and he was too far off to be able to tell whether Toughy was safe or not. The Loyal Knights all thought that he was, and they raised a yell:

"You're safe, Toughy! He never touched you!"

"Sure, I'm safe!" declared Toughy, who had picked himself up and was standing on the bag watching Sandy with a grin. Toughy's knees had caught Sandy right square in the stomach; and he was rolling over and over on the ground trying not to yell. But he still had the ball in the glove of his left hand.

"Aw, you're out!" he shouted indignantly. "I had you by a foot!"

"Out nothin'! You're a liar!" shouted back Toughy.

"You're another!" answered Sandy. "I touched you right on the shoulder!"

"Aw, you did not! I had me foot on the bag anyhow," retorted Toughy.

Just then Frank came running up. He knew Sandy would be all right again as soon as he got his wind back, so he didn't even bother to ask him if he were hurt.

"Who saw that play?" he asked.

Several of the Loyal Knights, who had been at least nine feet away on the wrong side of the bag, spoke up.

"We did! He was safe a mile!" they all said.

Frank turned to Sandy.

"How about it, Alan?" he asked. "Did you touch him out or not?"

Sandy had stopped rolling over on the ground by this time.

"Sure I did," he said. "He knows it, too."

Irving Watson had just come up and Frank appealed to him.

"Did you see that play?" he inquired.

Irving had been the nearest one of our team to it, and unless it had been a very close decision indeed he couldn't have helped telling whether or not Toughy was out. In fact, he told me afterwards that he knew it was out; but he wanted to make a hit with Frank for the Patrol Leadership by saying what would make Frank think he was especially truthful and trustworthy.

"He was safe," he answered.

Sandy knew positively that he had touched Toughy out, and he looked as if he were going to get mad as the dickens at Irving. Then he saw Frank watching his expression, and he shut up

tighter than a clam and never even said boo. Frank looked at both of them sort of queerly.

"Which one of you two fellows is telling the truth?" he asked rather sharply.

Irving turned a little red, but he spoke up promptly.

"I could see the play all right," he said. "Toughy was safe."

Frank turned again to Sandy.

"You heard what he said, didn't you, Scout McLean?" he remarked.

"Yes, sir," answered Sandy.

Frank turned on his heel and walked away.

The next batter laid down a bunt along the base line which Sandy fumbled, and Toughy Merrill scored.

After the game was all over we gave our Troop Yell for the Loyal Knights, just as we had done at the football game. This time, however, they cheered us back, although I could see how mad they were at having us play rings around them as we had done. Then I heard one of them say to Toughy:

"You were really out a mile that time at third."

"Sure I was," answered Toughy, with a grin.

"I just wanted to see if I could bluff that big guy."

Frank happened to be passing right near the group of Loyal Knights at that time. I don't know whether he overheard them or not.

CHAPTER XIV

THE FIRST OVERNIGHT HIKE

FRANK had promised us that we could get into practice for our summer camping trip by going on an overnight hike as soon as the weather was warm enough, the dampness all out of the ground, and the trees and so forth in leaf; but it was nearly the middle of May before everything suited him. Then we set off one Friday afternoon directly after school.

Mr. Armstrong, Malcolm Graham and Phil Elliott had been out scouting some time before, looking for a good camp site; and they had decided upon a dry, level place in the woods (with the ground sloping just enough, though, to drain the water off in case it should rain before we got back): and with a spring near by, and a good-sized clump of young hemlock trees which would come in handy for thatching our lean-tos and building the beds. There was plenty of other wood that we could use for building a campfire, of course.

We all had our Scout packs strapped over our shoulders, and besides we each had two blankets —one a rubber poncho and one an ordinary woolen blanket—made up into a long roll with the ends fastened together and all the things we needed which wouldn't go into our packs rolled up inside them. Each half-Patrol carried its own griddle and Scout hatchet and its own food supplies—eggs, sugar, condensed milk, bacon, potatoes, pepper, salt, and butter, a little self-raising flour, some cocoa, and a nice, fat, juicy beefsteak.

There were only three half-Patrols, instead of four, that went on the hike. Dug Barnard had a cold, and Tub Kent, Benny Sanders, and Babe Collins, all of the First Patrol, didn't come because their parents had said they would rather they didn't. Of our own Patrol, Micky McCarthy delivered papers every morning and so couldn't get away; while Phil Elliott had been taking care of an old lady's furnace for her all winter as one of his Daily Good Turns—and even though spring had come she didn't want to let the fire go out yet for fear that it might turn cold again, or at any rate get damp and raw. She only lived a few doors from Phil's house and she was a widow with six children, mostly girls, and not any too much money; so any little thing like not

having to pay a man to look after the furnace helped. Anyhow, Phil had been doing it for her regularly. He hadn't even missed the morning after he got hurt saving the train from the washout.

That only left Sandy McLean, Laddie Thayer, Irving Watson, Floyd Pearce, and myself in the Second Patrol. Dunk McLean stayed home because his people said they didn't want both him and Sandy to go, and as Sandy was the oldest of course he had the say as to which stayed at home.

As neither the regular Patrol Leader nor Assistant of the Second Patrol was along, Frank picked Sandy as a Patrol Leader for the hike. I guess Irving Watson was a little bit angry because he hadn't been chosen, but of course he didn't say anything.

The place that had been selected for the camp was only about three miles away. We all wore the regular Scout shoes and observed the two rules for hiking, "Never walk over anything you can walk around." "Never step on anything that you can step over"; so in spite of having our packs and blankets to carry, we were not at all tired or "foot-weary" when we got there.

The first thing we did was to start in building the lean-tos that we were going to use for shelter

during the night. We didn't have any tents and we couldn't afford the money for pieces of canvas to make them from. Frank said that lean-tos were just exactly as good, so long as it didn't rain; and that even if it did rain, a properly thatched lean-to would drain the water off before it had time to leak through. We had practiced building lean-tos in some of the woods near home, so we knew just how to go about it, and each half-Patrol built its own lean-to.

First, we picked out a couple of trees about eight or ten feet apart with branches about six feet above the ground. In the crotch of these branches we laid our main "ridge pole." Then we cut a lot of stout branches about twelve feet long, with crotches that would fit over the "ridge pole," and leaned them up against it at an angle of about forty-five degrees and about two feet apart. Then across those and parallel with the "ridge pole" we laid some more long branches, either resting them in crotches which we had left on the slanting poles or fastening them to the poles with long strips of green, pliable bark. On top of these cross-pieces we laid our thatching—soft, thick tips of hemlock branches with little crotches left on the ends so that we could hook them on to the cross-pieces.

Frank and Mr. Armstrong built their own lean-

to; and although there were only two of them, they had their lean-to finished ahead of any of the half-Patrols. One of the squads of the First Patrol got theirs finished next, and we were third.

By the time we had finished building our lean-tos it was beginning to grow dusk, and we set about cooking our dinners. Each half-Patrol built its own fire and did its own cooking; and each of us assigned one fellow to get the firewood, one fellow to build and look after the fire, and the other two to cook.

For dinner we had beefsteak, baked potatoes, bread, pickles, and cocoa. The beefsteak we cooked by laying a clean, flat stone over the fire, and then putting the steak on it when it got hot enough. The potatoes we buried in a bed of coals in the fire and kept covering them with live coals until they were done. It took nearly three-quarters of an hour, and we had cooked and eaten the steak by the time the potatoes were really ready. They tasted good, though, all by themselves. The bread and pickles we had brought with us, of course; and the cocoa we made in the pot we had brought, in the usual way, and then made little cups by twisting pieces of birch bark into a funnel and fastening the point with a split stick.

After dinner each half-Patrol cleaned up the

remains of the meal—such as they were—washed the cooking utensils and the knives and forks we had been using, and then cleaned up all the mess we had made in establishing the camp, and so forth. The refuse from the dinner we disposed of by digging a deep hole off in the woods a little distance, on the other side of the camp from the spring, and burying it. Then we put out our separate cooking fires, soaking the ground thoroughly with water for two or three feet around them to make sure they wouldn't travel or spring up again, and then Frank chose four fellows from the First Patrol to gather wood and build the big campfire for the whole Troop.

It was really quite dusk by this time, and the fire looked awfully effective against the dark background of the woods, with the flames leaping and swirling in the air, and a steady stream of sparks carried up into the air for some distance before they burned out. The glare of the fire made it impossible for us to see distinctly outside the big circle of light which the fire itself made; and the wood looked blacker and more indistinct than ever as a result. Every now and then a twig would snap or something would stir off in the woods; and then we began to hear the calls of birds or of animals. Once something went crash-

ing through the woods a couple of hundred yards to our right; and one of the fellows began to feel scared. He said he had heard somebody say that somebody else had told somebody else that he had come across some tracks in the woods which somebody else said were bear tracks; but Frank just laughed at him.

"There aren't any bears in these woods," he said. "And they wouldn't bother us even if there were. Bears never attack people if people leave them alone; and no wild animal will come very near a campfire anyhow. You probably heard a dead branch falling from some tree."

Then he began telling us stories of college life —athletics and college stunts and hazing and everything of that sort; until the fellows forgot that there ever was such a thing as a bear. Frank told stories of this sort pretty fairly well; and, before we realized how long we had been listening to him, he drew out his watch and looked at it.

"Nine o'clock, fellows!" he said. "Everybody turn in now. And remember, no talking or noise in the camp until I blow the Scout whistle for rising time at six-thirty in the morning."

We had built our beds at the same time we built the lean-tos; by covering the floor with interlaced

hemlock branches, the soft tips curving toward the foot of the bed at the opening of the lean-to. Over these we spread our rubber blankets. They were the only special thing we had bought; but we knew we would need them, anyway, when we went camping in the summer, so it wasn't really an extravagance. We put the rubber side down to keep out moisture and dampness, and then rolled ourselves up in our regular blankets. It made an awfully comfortable bed, provided you knew how to build it so that the butt end of the hemlock branches didn't stick into you; and I guess we would all have slept like logs if it wasn't that the excitement and the strange surroundings kept most of the fellows awake for some time into the night.

Each half-Patrol of course was under either a Patrol Leader or an Assistant Patrol Leader; and Frank told them that he would hold them personally responsible for perfect quiet and order being kept in his lean-to until the whistle blew for rising time. Of course we were all on our honor as Scouts to obey our Scout Master and our Patrol Leader about not making any noise or disturbance.

Frank had appointed five squads of two fellows each who were to act as night watchers by the

campfire in relays of two hours each. This was both in order to keep the campfire going all through the night and prevent our being surprised by any tramps or anybody else who might be attracted by the light of the fire. After each squad had finished its two hours it would go and quietly wake up the two fellows who were to watch next; and then turn in itself for as much sleep as it could get.

Irving Watson and I had the third watch, from one to three in the morning, and we didn't feel a bit like getting up when Foxy Merrit and Ken Preston, who had had the watch before, came and poked us in the ribs. The stars were shining brightly when we finally got out into the open; but there was no moon that night and the woods were as black as pitch. Foxy and Ken had left the campfire burning brightly, and it threw all kinds of flickering shadows on the ground and around among the lean-tos. We could hear some of the fellows breathing heavily in their sleep, and once in a while there would be a sort of a grunt as if some fellow had partly woke up and had turned over to go to sleep again. Except for that the night was awfully still—but after you got used to the stillness you began to hear a steady undercurrent of noises—faint cracklings and snappings

and rustlings, sometimes way off in the woods and sometimes so close at hand it made you jump. Then we could hear the wind blowing through the trees, and the trickle and gurgle of the water from our spring. Once in a great while we would hear the call of some animal, or the barking of a dog way off in the distance; and then somewhere around us a screech owl began to set up his cry. It is a pretty mournful cry even in the daytime; but at night, with nothing but the pitch-black, lonely woods around us, it sounded almost uncanny.

"Gee, I'm glad I don't have to watch out here all alone!" said Irving; and I felt pretty much the same way myself.

Then we got talking in low tones, so as not to disturb any of the fellows who were sleeping; and finally we got to discussing who had the best chances in our Patrol of being picked by Frank for Patrol Leader and Assistant Patrol Leader, and Irving said:

"I think Phil Elliott is sure to get the Patrol Leadership, and either Sandy McLean or myself probably the Assistant."

"Phil Elliott won't get it," I answered.

"Sure he will," returned Irving. "He's done his Scout work just as well as any of the rest of

us, and he gave the Alarm Signal and directed the work of damming the brook on the night of the big thunderstorm, not to mention saving the train at the risk of his own life; and besides all that he was the fellow who really won our football game with Troop Two on Thanksgiving Day, and he showed then that he had more nerve than any other fellow in the Troop. Of course he'll get it."

I didn't know whether I ought to say anything about the conversation I overheard between Frank and Phil just after the football game with the Loyal Knights; but I finally decided it would be all right to.

"So you see he has probably been out of it all along, no matter what he has done," I finished.

"Oh, bosh!" exclaimed Irving. "Mr. Hall has probably changed his mind about that long ago. Phil isn't the sort of fellow to do all he has done unless he knew he had a chance at the Leadership."

I knew Frank didn't change his mind very easily; but then Phil had certainly made up for losing his temper just that one time; and finally I agreed with Irving that he was sure to be the one to get it.

For one thing, I didn't exactly see who *would* get it if he didn't. Frank had said he wouldn't pick any fellow who wouldn't make a good Patrol Leader anyhow, and Phil was just naturally suited for the job, so long as he had gotten over having a swelled head and trying to boss things that were none of his business. I knew that of course Dunk McLean, Laddie Thayer, and Floyd Pearce didn't stand any show at all; and of the other five in the Patrol Phil certainly seemed to have the first call for the place.

That left the Assistant Patrol Leadership the only thing to puzzle about. Irving seemed to think that on account of his having been picked for Patrol Leader when the Troop started and having done his Scout work just as well as any of the rest, that he had the advantage over the other fellows in the Patrol. I was inclined to think that Sandy McLean would be the one Frank would pick, on account of his having helped rescue Duncan and Frank that time in the cave and on account of his having done his Scout work very thoroughly, and having done at least one, and often two or three, Good Turns that really were Good Turns every day. Frank had had us turn in a list, at each regular meeting, of all the Good Turns we had done during the week; so he knew

pretty well what each fellow had done to live up to that part of the Scout Law. Of course he trusted to our honor not to put down anything that we didn't actually do, and not to exaggerate at all. He said he was going to collect them and give them all back to us at the end of the first year, so that we could see how much we had really done in that time.

Sandy was a rather quiet sort of fellow, but I happened to know some especially good Good Turns which he had done; and I thought that perhaps they might count more than being a good ball player and runner like Irving. But then Irving was a quiet sort of fellow himself, when he didn't get mad at something; and, for all I could tell, his Good Turns might be even better than Sandy's. It looked like just about an even chance between those two fellows.

The campfire was burning a little low, so we got up to put some more wood on. Just as we reached the wood pile and had our backs to the fire we heard the same crashing noise in the woods near us that we had noticed earlier in the evening. Irving jumped about a foot in the air when he heard it, and dropped the stick of wood he had just picked up.

"Do you suppose it really is a bear?" he asked,

forgetting to speak in a whisper. "Bud Tompkin's Pa's cousin says——"

I felt pretty well scared myself; but it seemed to me that if there really was a bear in the woods near us it was just the time we needed to build up the fire; so I picked up my stick again and turned to put it on the fire.

"Let's put some more wood on the fire first," I said. "Then if we hear it again we can call Frank—Mr. Hall, I mean."

Irving, with his back still to the fire, stooped to pick up a stick, when he suddenly gave a sort of cry.

"Look! Did you see that? Right over there by the edge of the woods!" he exclaimed.

Then suddenly the screech owl hooted again, and that and Irving's tone scared me stiff.

"What is it? What did you see?" I asked, all ready to dash over to Frank's lean-to and wake him and Mr. Armstrong up if we needed to.

The edge of the woods was only faintly visible, now that the campfire burned rather low, and the fire itself cast all sorts of queer flickering shadows so that everything looked rather weird and ghostlike.

"I thought I saw something moving over

there," whispered Irving excitedly. "Something big and black! There it goes now! Look!"

I looked where he was pointing, but I couldn't see what he meant. The shadows were dancing so queerly that there might have been a whole flock of bears creeping up on us. But Irving suddenly gave a sort of a scream and threw the stick of wood he had picked up just as hard as he could throw it toward the edge of the wood. Only just as he threw it, his hand slipped somehow or other and instead of killing any bears on the edge of the wood, the stick went right straight through the opening of our lean-to. From the sound it made when it struck I could tell it had landed on something soft and not against the roof of the lean-to, and the next minute we heard a sort of a stifled cry.

Irving and I forgot all about the bear, and we rushed over to the lean-to to see who had been hurt. But before we got there Sandy McLean appeared in the opening of the lean-to, all doubled up, with his hands over his stomach and groaning loud enough to scare the bear away—if there really was any bear to scare. We saw that he must have been hit squarely in the stomach with the stick of wood, and we set about giving him First Aid, but before he got to feeling really

happy again we had made so much noise that all the other fellows in the lean-to had been waked up, and it's a wonder we didn't disturb everybody else in camp. Of course it only took three or four minutes for Sandy to be all right again; and then he told the other fellows in the lean-to to quit laughing at him and mind their own business, and then he went back to sleep again. Irving and I finished putting wood on the campfire and then stayed up by it until our watch was over. We didn't see or hear anything more of the "bear," though.

None of us wanted to get up when the rising whistle blew at half-past six the next morning. Most of the fellows hadn't slept much the first part of the night, and of course the fellows who had the watches at the campfire had lost just that much extra sleep. I don't believe Irving and I would have gotten up at all if Sandy McLean hadn't tickled us in the ribs.

"Get up, Scouts Watson and Jenkins!" he said. "I'll pour cold water all over you if you don't."

That got us up all right, and then we washed our hands and faces with the rest of the crowd in a little pool formed by the overflow from the spring. After that the whole Troop went through setting-up exercises under Frank's di-

rection, and then we cooked breakfast over the large campfire. Frank picked one squad to get more wood for the fire, another to cook breakfast for the whole crowd, and a third to clean up the dishes and the mess afterward.

For breakfast we had griddle cakes made from the eggs, sugar, condensed milk, and self-raising flour. After they were all eaten we fried slices of bacon on the griddle, then some thick slices of bread in the fat from the bacon; and finally some thinly sliced raw potatoes. I never tasted anything half so good in all my life before.

After breakfast the camp cleaning squad got busy, washed the dishes and the knives and forks, and cleaned up all the mess again, burying it in a different place. Then Frank had us line up in our regular Troop formation, with each half-Patrol, with its leader, by itself. Then he asked the Patrol Leaders to report whether there had been any noise or disorder in their lean-tos during the night. The Patrol Leader of the First Patrol reported that one of the fellows in his lean-to had taken up more than his share of the bed; and the Assistant Patrol Leader said that one of the fellows in his squad had snored so loudly that it kept the other fellows awake; but

Frank didn't seem to take either of these reports very seriously. Next, he turned to Sandy.

"Well, Patrol Leader McLean, have you any noise or disorder to report?" he asked.

Sandy stepped forward and stood at attention, giving the Scout salute.

"Yes, sir, I have," he answered.

"Well, then, what is it?" asked Frank, evidently expecting some other fool report.

"One of the fellows made such a rumpus about two o'clock in the morning that he woke all the rest up," said Sandy.

Frank looked rather surprised and I saw him frown a little.

"Will the Scout who made the disturbance please step forward and give his explanation," he ordered.

Sandy saluted again.

"Please, sir, I did it myself," he answered.

Frank looked even more surprised.

"What explanation have you to make?" he asked rather sharply.

Sandy didn't say anything at first. I guess he was waiting to see if Irving Watson spoke up. Finally he said:

"I haven't any to make, sir."

This time Frank really did frown.

"Take off your Tenderfoot badge!" he ordered.

Sandy looked scared, and I could see that Irving was beginning to feel uncomfortable. Sandy took off his Tenderfoot badge and handed it to Frank without a word. Then Frank pinned it on to his coat again, upside down.

"You are in disgrace, Scout McLean," he said. "You will wear your Tenderfoot badge reversed for the next two weeks and you will not take part in any Scout activities except the Daily Good Turn during that time."

Sandy saluted a third time.

"Yes, sir," he answered.

This was too much for Irving. He stepped forward to within three paces of Frank and saluted.

"Well, Scout Watson, what is it?" asked Frank.

"Please, sir," said Irving, "I was responsible for Scout McLean making the disturbance."

Frank looked at him rather sternly.

"How did it happen?" he asked.

"I—I—threw a stick of wood accidentally and hit him in the stomach," answered Irving.

One or two of the fellows snickered at this, and Frank sort of smiled.

"How did you happen to throw a stick of wood 'accidentally'?" he inquired.

A couple of the fellows laughed outright at that, and Irving began to get red in the face.

"I didn't throw it accidentally," he returned. "It was my watch at the campfire and I was throwing the stick at something else—but it slipped."

"What on earth were you throwing sticks at at that time of night?" asked Frank, looking rather puzzled.

"At—at—a *bear!*" blurted out Irving.

I wish you could have heard the shout that went up then. Even Frank threw back his head and roared. Then he reached out, unfastened the Tenderfoot badge from Sandy's coat once more, and pinned it on right side up again.

"Scout McLean, you are in good standing again," he said.

"Yes, sir," said Sandy, giving the Scout Salute a fourth time.

We spent the rest of the morning playing Scout games, like stalking, Scout hunting, and flag raiding; and then we made our lunch of some boxes of crackers which we had brought with us

and what was left of the bacon, potatoes, and cocoa. Finally, we put the campfire out thoroughly, cleaned the camping ground, and started on the hike back to town. On the way Frank called Irving to one side.

"Scout Watson," he asked, "why didn't you tell me right away what happened last night instead of waiting until I had reversed Alan's Tenderfoot badge?"

(Alan was the name by which Sandy's folks generally called him.)

Irving hesitated a minute.

"I guess I just didn't want to do it until I couldn't help myself," he answered rather shamefacedly.

After we had gone along a little farther Frank suddenly called the Troop to a halt.

"There's one thing I forgot to tell you fellows at camp last evening," he said. "The different Scout Troops in the city have all gotten up baseball teams and arrangements have been made to play a series of games for the Championship of the city. We are scheduled to play Troup Four, while Troop Two meets Troop Three; and then the winners of these preliminary contests are to play each other for the championship on Decoration Day—the proceeds to go toward a new

building for the Library. Oh, yes. And somebody or other has offered to pay the summer camping expenses of the Troop winning the Championship."

CHAPTER XV

THE DECORATION DAY GAME

ON the following Saturday we played our preliminary game in the Troop Championship Series with Troop Four. It was really a shame the way we treated them. We broke the points in the Scout Law about being kind and helpful and friendly about four times an inning. We tried not to beat them as badly as we did, but we just couldn't help ourselves without actually letting ourselves get put out or muffing everything that came along.

Sandy pitched for us, and after the first inning he didn't even try to get much of a curve on the ball, but just sent easy, straight ones across the plate so as to see if they could hit the ball. Once in a while they did, but it was generally just a little pop fly or a grounder that wouldn't have knocked a sick cat over and which anyone who wasn't blind and lame in both arms could have fielded with his feet tied together. The final score was something like 27-3. Nobody except

the official scorer bothered to keep count of our runs after the first couple of innings.

Troop Two played Troop Three on the same day, and they won out by a pretty large score likewise. Troop Three was mostly Italians; while Troop Two, besides being the oldest, largest, and best Troop in the city, had Mr. Stead, the Physical Director of the High School, for their Scout Master. He knew just as much about how to play the game and coach teams as Frank did, and besides one of the fellows in the Troop was a regular pitcher on the High School team; so we knew we would have our hands full, and probably a little over, when we tackled them for the Troop Championship and the free summer camping trip.

When the afternoon of Decoration Day finally came around the grandstand was even more packed than it had been for our football game—also the one with Troop Two—on Thanksgiving Day. I guess people must like to watch baseball better than football and had heard what good teams we each had; or else they cared more about a new library building than they had done about paying off the debt of the Hospital. I don't know which.

Just before the game was to start Mr. Stead explained through a megaphone that this game,

besides being for the Troop Championship of the city, was to decide which Troop should have its summer camping expenses paid for it by a certain anonymous gentleman who was very much interested in Scout work and who also believed in encouraging "manly and healthful forms of athletics"—the understanding being that the Troop which won the camping trip was to make the most of the opportunities it provided for health and physical development, apart from their regular Scout work.

Then Frank had to stick his finger into the pie by getting up and saying that it was contrary to the spirit of Scout work to do anything for a prize, and that it had been decided to accept "the kind offer of the anonymous gentleman" only after it had been distinctly understood that the game was simply for the Troop Championship of the city, and that the camping trip was a matter for the Scout Master of the winning Troop to avail himself of or not, as he saw fit and as the "circumstances warranted." This sounded nice, of course, but it really amounted to about the same thing.

After both teams had done a little practicing and "warming up" we went to bat first, and Howard Appleby, who was the pitcher for Troop Two, struck out Phil Elliott, the first man up for

our side. Dunk McLean was hit on the arm by a pitched ball and took first. Irving Watson, who was next at bat, managed to connect with the ball, but it was only a short infield hit, and although there was quite a little "string" to it the Troop Two shortstop fielded it without much of any trouble and even made a double play, getting Dunk at second and Irving at first, retiring the side.

That showed us that we were up against some real ball players who knew their business; but we made up our minds that just the same they'd have to work pretty hard if they expected to beat us, even if we didn't have a High School pitcher on our side.

Frank had chosen Micky to start the game for us, and it didn't take the Troop Two fellows long to find out that he couldn't throw much except a straight, fast ball. The first batter up drove a long fly toward left field. Foxy Merrit made a hard run for it, but he started just a little bit too late and he couldn't get under it before it fell. Fortunately, it struck foul by a couple of feet. But the very next ball was another long fly in the same direction, which went over Foxy's head and landed fair. Foxy fielded it in time to hold the runner at second base, however.

The second man to come to the plate bunted and reached first safely because Irving Watson, who fielded it, held the ball instead of throwing it, in the hope that the man on second would start for third, so that he would be able to catch him between bases. He didn't, however, and the next Troop Two man sent up a high foul which Tub Kent nearly fell all over himself in catching.

Then the heaviest batter on their team came up, looking as though he meant business. He made a couple of vicious swings at the ball, knocking a foul each time, and then cracked a hard line drive straight at short stop. Irving couldn't have got out of the way of it if he had wanted to, so he stuck out his hands and the ball went right bang into them. It was so hot, though, that Irving couldn't hang on to it, and so he dropped it and the men on second and first started to tear for the next base.

Frank had coached us particularly never to lose our heads or play poorly on account of an error, so Irving picked up the ball as quickly as he could and threw to Dunk McLean at third. Dunk caught the ball, touched the bag with his toe, and then threw to Phil Elliott at second just in time to make a double play and the third out. That

made Troop Two sit up and take notice a little, I guess.

The game was just as close and exciting as the first inning all through. We were used to Frank's pitching, so we managed to hit Howard Appleby just about as often as they hit our pitcher. After that first inning Frank had sent Sandy in to pitch instead of Micky, because he saw that curves were the only thing that would be any good against a team like Troop Two and that they would bat Micky's straight, fast balls all over the field if he gave them half a chance.

Neither team seemed to be able to make safe hits when they were needed, however, and both infields and outfields worked so well that no runs came in on errors. Once I missed a long foul in right field, but the fellow struck out afterward so it didn't really matter. Troop Two got men on the bases a little oftener than we did; but until the seventh inning not one of them reached home.

In that inning the first man up for Troop Two sent out a long foul fly to left field, which Foxy succeeded in getting, although he fell flat on his face in doing it. The next batter drove a stinging liner straight at Sandy, in the pitcher's box. Sandy didn't have time to get out of the way and let Phil Elliott field it, so he stuck out his hands for

it and dropped it, just as Irving had done earlier in the game. Unlike Irving, however, he didn't field it quickly enough to keep the runner from reaching his base.

Then up came our old friend, the heavy-hitter, and he landed hard on the first ball pitched and drove it just over Phil Elliott's head. Ken Preston, in center, fielded the ball, but in the meantime the heavy-hitter had reached first and the other fellow had gone around to third.

After him came Howard Appleby, who, being the pitcher, wasn't anything extra with a bat. He took a couple of swings at Sandy's curves and then surprised himself by making a little infield hit which Irving Watson got easily. Only, like an idiot, Irving tried for a double play to catch both the batter and the man on first. He got the double play all right, but in the meantime the man on third got home without half trying. That was what the baseball writers call a "bone" play. If there had been one out already, it might have been different; but as it was, the proper thing was to play for first to get the putout and then for home to keep the run from coming in. Irving knew this, but he just lost his head for the moment. You have to think pretty fairly quick in baseball sometimes.

The Troop Two fellow who followed got a base on balls and went to second when the next man bunted and reached first safely because Dunk McLean was too slow in fielding the ball. Then Troop Two's catcher came to the plate and he lifted a long fly to right field. As there were two out anyway, of course the fellows on the bases set out for home as fast as they could tear.

I was playing out in right field, naturally, and I knew that all I needed to do was to catch the ball for the last out; so I shaded my eyes with my hand to be able to judge it better. Then I saw that it was going to fall short, and I started in on a run so as to get it before it touched the ground. Just as I reached it and leaned forward to make the catch, my foot struck a stone or something and I went sprawling. I picked myself up right away again and chased after the ball, which was rolling still farther into right field; but the two runs came in before I could get it. Sandy struck the last man out.

That made the score three to nothing against us, with only two innings left to play. Frank told us to try to get a couple of men on bases and then push them around for runs by bunting or by sacrifice hits, instead of each of us trying to make a

home run of his own and ending up by striking out.

The first man up for us was Irving Watson. He had two strikes and three balls called on him, and then Howard Appleby threw a swift outshoot. It looked as though it might be going to hit him, so Irving jumped back a little from the plate and ducked at the same time. As he did so the ball curved right over the plate, and it would have been the third strike if the tip of Irving's bat, which he was holding over his shoulder, hadn't happened to connect with the ball.

I guess Irving was more surprised than any one else, but as soon as he heard the crack he dropped his bat as if it were hot and dug out for first. Frank had coached us to do that.

As it happened, the ball struck just in front of the plate, and Troop Two's catcher was so taken by surprise that he didn't pick it up and make the throw to first in time to catch Irving.

I was pretty sure that Irving would try to steal second, because we couldn't afford not to take chances at this stage of the game; and Irving was a pretty speedy runner anyhow. He had stolen second once before during the game, but hadn't gotten any farther.

But Troop Two's catcher had guessed that he

might try to steal, and he signaled the pitcher to throw the ball a little to the right of the plate so that he would be in a good position to throw to second. Irving was about halfway down when he saw that the catcher had the ball and was all ready to throw it.

He knew that he couldn't reach second then unless the throw was dropped, so he stopped short as if he were going to run back to first to escape being put out. This sort of upset the catcher's calculations, and he sent the ball to first instead of second, hoping to nab Irving before he had time to get back to the bag.

But Irving had figured on his doing this, and instead of making a try for first he stopped himself again and kept on to second after all. The first baseman got the catcher's throw all right, and then sent the ball on to second just as quick as he knew how. But Irving made a slide, feet first, for the bag, and got there safely.

On the next ball pitched, Sandy McLean, who was at the bat, made a neat little sacrifice bunt and Irving went on to third. Laddie Thayer was next up, and what should he do but strike out. Then Micky McCarthy stepped up to the plate, looking as if he meant to hammer the ball clean out of the county. He let two balls pass—one of which

turned out to be a strike—and then he slammed the third one for all he was worth.

It was a screaming hot line drive, straight at short stop, and Irving tore out for home, never thinking for a moment that it would be fielded. But it was, and of course the Troop Two short-stop threw to home plate to cut off the run. Fortunately, the catcher dropped the throw in trying to touch Irving out, and everybody was safe all around. The next fellow struck out.

In their half of the inning Troop Two had a piece of hard luck. Howard Appleby, their pitcher, had knocked a hard fly right over center fielder's head. Laddie Thayer—who had substituted for Ken Preston after the first few innings because he could bat better than either Ken or the regular substitutes, Buck Ewing and Floyd Pearce —turned around and chased after it for all he was worth.

Foxy Merrit had rushed in from left field to back up Laddie, and he grabbed up the ball and threw to third, as Howard had already rounded second by the time the ball was fielded. Howard hadn't expected such quick work, and when he saw Dunk McLean at third get the ball and all ready to touch him out, Howard tried to turn sharply and get back to second. But in doing it he

wrenched his ankle and had to be helped off the field. He was out, of course.

We got the next two putouts with very little trouble, and then went to bat in the first half of the ninth, needing two runs to tie the score and carry the game into extra innings, and three to win.

With Howard Appleby out of it, Troop Two had to send in a substitute pitcher, and besides not having any particular speed or curves he was as wild as a chicken with its head cut off. We got two bases on balls, two safe hits, and a sacrifice fly out of him; and by the end of the inning we had made two more runs, tying the score. The only reason that we didn't win the game then and there is that Troop Two rose right up to the occasion and did some fielding that would have made a big league team sit up and take notice. In fact, they ended the inning with a beauty of a double play, which shut off at least one run and probably two or three.

We didn't feel so terribly unhappy over it, though, because we had tied the score already; so if we could only keep Troop Two from scoring in their half of the ninth we were almost certain to score enough runs to win the game in the tenth inning, with the kind of pitching we were getting.

The first fellow up for Troop Two was hit by a pitched ball and took first. He got second when the next man knocked a hard grounder toward first. Malcolm Graham was lying some little distance back of the base line anyhow, and he had to go still farther away from the bag to get the ball; but Sandy rushed in from pitcher's box and covered the base for him, getting Malcolm's throw just in time for the putout.

The next batter drove a long fly toward right field, which I got without much trouble and relayed home in time to keep the other fellow at third.

This made two out with a man on third base; so of course the thing to do was to play for the batter, because if we got the putout at first base the run wouldn't count even if it came in. Then in our half of the tenth, against a weak pitcher, we would be practically sure to make enough runs to win the game, provided that we didn't "blow up" in Troop Two's half and let them get over as many runs as we had. I could almost see us off on that camping trip for most of the summer!

It looked especially easy, too, because a fellow named Marshall Bertrand was up, and he hadn't made a hit of any kind during the game. The

chances were that Sandy would strike him out on the first three or four balls.

In fact, the very first ball he pitched was a strike. It was a sort of an outshoot, and Marshall thought it was going to hit him and jumped back from the plate a little. But instead of doing that the ball curved right over the corner of the plate, and Marshall looked sort of foolish when Mr. Stead called a strike.

Sandy thought he would try the same thing again; but this time the ball curved outside the plate instead of over it. Then Sandy tried an inshoot. At first Marshall thought it wasn't going to come anywhere near him, and then he changed his mind in a hurry and swung at it, just too late. That made two strikes and only one ball, so Sandy took a chance and pitched another inshoot, hoping that Marshall would strike at it also. But this time he let it go by, and the umpire called a ball.

Sandy only knew three curves, and now he tried the last one, which was a drop. It dropped all right, but it struck the ground in front of the plate and Tub Kent nearly let the run come in from third by muffing it.

This made three balls and two strikes, and Sandy didn't dare take the chance of giving him

his base on balls by trying any more fancy curves; so instead he threw a straight one right over the center of the plate, hoping that Marshall would let it go by on the chance of its being a ball.

Marshall had struck out once before on Sandy's curves, but I guess he could hit fairly slow, straight balls, if he knew when they were coming. Anyway, he closed his eyes and swung for all he was worth.

I heard the crack of the bat and saw the ball start on a dead slow line drive between first base and pitcher's box, and I ran in so as to back up Malcolm Graham when he fielded it.

As soon as the ball had been hit, Malcolm, who was playing back and to the left of the base as usual, started for it, while Sandy rushed over from pitcher's box to cover first. The ball hadn't been hit especially hard, but it was just a little too far over for Duncan to be able to get it on the fly. He made a leap for it, just the same, and tried for a grandstand catch with his bare hand. He managed to stop the ball, but he didn't hang on to it and it fell to the ground right at his feet. He stooped quickly, picked it up, and made a quick throw to Sandy at first.

But on account of his position and the haste with which he had to throw, he wasn't accurate

and the ball went so wide of the bag that Sandy had to stretch way over to reach it at all. He got it, though, and just at the very same instant Marshall jumped for the bag with both feet, so as to get there quicker. The fellow on third had started for home as soon as the ball was hit, of course.

Frank was umpiring the bases, and he had run over to see the play, but it had all happened so quickly that he was still some distance away when Marshall jumped for the bag.

"Out at first!" he called.

I threw up my cap and yelled, because that meant that the run didn't count, on account of the side being out, and that an extra inning would have to be played after all. But Sandy, who had been upset when Marshall bumped into him sliding for the bag, jumped to his feet.

"He wasn't out!" he exclaimed. "My foot was off the base when I caught the ball!"

Marshall, of course, overheard him.

"Hooray, fellows!" he shouted. "I'm safe! We win the game!"

Mr. Stead came running up to where Frank was standing.

"How about it, Mr. Umpire?" he asked. "Was he out or safe?"

"He was safe!" Sandy declared again. "My foot was way off the base when I made the catch."

Frank looked at him a moment and then turned to Mr. Stead.

"I change my decision," he said. "The runner was safe."

At this all the Troop Two fellows began yelling and cheering and jumping up and down and slapping each other on the back like mad, because it meant that they had won the game and the Troop championship and the summer camping trip and everything else.

Then a tall, well-dressed, athletic-looking man, whom I guessed must be the "anonymous gentleman" who had offered the camping trip, vaulted over the enclosure separating the field from the grandstand, went up to Mr. Stead, and took him by the hand.

I thought I remembered having seen him before, but at first I couldn't recollect where. Then it suddenly flashed over me that it was the Mr. Miller who had helped Frank stop the panic in this same grandstand on Thanksgiving Day.

I don't think I ever saw such a disappointed crowd as our team, and I'm not anxious to see one again. We thought we had the game won sure,

until Sandy spoke; and we certainly wanted the camping trip just as badly as Troop Two did. I guess some of the fellows felt rather mad at Sandy for having really been the cause of our losing it. In fact, as we were going off the field, Irving Watson came up to him.

"Aw, what did you go and tell Mr. Hall he was safe for?" he asked. "He was the umpire and he called it out. You didn't need to say anything."

"He was safe, just the same," returned Sandy. "Do you suppose I'd let us win the game and—and—the camping trip on a wrong decision?"

"Sure I do!" exclaimed Irving. "It wasn't any of your business! Mr. Hall called it out and he was the one to judge. Why didn't you keep your mouth shut?"

"How about the Scout Oath and the Scout Law?" suggested Sandy.

"Aw, the dickens with the Scout Law!" continued Irving, looking around to make sure that Frank wasn't within hearing distance.

Then he turned his back on Sandy and joined Phil Elliott and a couple of others.

CHAPTER XVI

THE CHOOSING OF THE PATROL LEADERS

WHEN we came around to the Club House for our next regular meeting after the Decoration Day game, we were surprised to find Rusty Leonard waiting outside the door, which was still locked on account of Frank's not having come yet. (Ever since the second raid by the Loyal Knights we had padlocked the Club House so securely that even a professional burglar would have had to get in through the roof.)

"What the dickens are you doing here?" asked Micky McCarthy. "If it wasn't that Mr. Hall may show up any minute now I'd knock your ugly red head off for you! You haven't got any business here!"

"Sure I have!" answered Rusty. "I'm going to join the Troop."

"Not if we know it!" declared Phil Elliott and Irving Watson.

"Mr. Hall said I could take my Tenderfoot

examination this afternoon," continued Rusty. "I spoke to him about joining the Troop right after the baseball game we had with you fellows a couple of weeks ago."

"Got licked good, too, didn't you?" called out somebody.

Phil Elliott stepped up to Rusty.

"Aw, you're only joining the Troop so you can go off camping with us this summer—if we go at all, that is! I've got a good mind to punch your nose for you whether Mr. Hall finds it out or not!"

Rusty looked for a moment as if he were going to be the one to do the punching. But I guess he decided not to.

"Oh, no, I'm not," he retorted. "I'm joining so as to be able to flag slow freight trains and keep them from running over frogs on the track."

That shut Phil up, all right; and just then Malcolm Graham took a hand.

"What do you want to join a bunch of sissies and mollycoddles for?" he asked.

Rusty dug a hole in the ground with his toe.

"I guess maybe you aren't either, after all," he admitted finally. "I thought your holding our gang to a tie in football was just luck, but, after

the way you beat us in baseball, I guess maybe Scout work isn't such a kid's game, after all."

"Right you are, Rusty," said Malcolm. "Only if we're going to let you join this Troop you've got to learn a few things first. Were you a mucker to try to bust up our Club House last fall?"

"Sure I was!" answered Rusty, grinning.

"Aren't Boy Scouts better prepared for athletics and everything else than fellows who aren't?"

"Yep!"

"If we let you join our Troop do you agree that you will not be 'fresh,' or try to run things that are none of your business, but will consider yourself the inferior of every fellow at present in the Troop, so far as Scout work is concerned?"

This was a pretty hard pill for Rusty to swallow. He'd always been the leader of his own gang, and he naturally didn't care much for the idea of being less important than fellows like Babe Collins or Dunk McLean.

"Supposing I don't! Then what?" he asked.

"Then you won't get into the Troop at all," answered Malcolm promptly. "Now that we're really organized, no fellow can join, whether he passes his Tenderfoot examination or not, if more

than one-eighth of the members of the Troop vote against him."

Rusty thought a moment.

"All right," he decided at length. "Anything else?"

"You've got to promise all the rest of us that you will *do your best* to be a true Scout, and not just act as if it were all having sport and doing what you please."

"What do you call being a true Scout?" inquired Rusty.

"Live up to the Scout Law and the Scout Oath, like all the rest of us," answered Malcolm. "Don't try to be 'fresh,' or boss any of the other fellows around. Obey the orders of all the officials of the Troop. Never let yourself get really mad at any other fellow in the Troop, and never give any other fellow cause to feel mad at you. Act the same way toward everyone in the Troop that you would toward your best friend. Think of the other fellow first and yourself last. Don't stop to bother about someone else's opinion of you, but always do the right thing, regardless of the consequences. If you act like a true Scout, every fellow in the Troop will treat you as one; if you don't, you'll be sorry that you ever joined before we get through with you!"

Rusty thought it over a little more.

"I'll do as much as anyone else," he said at length. "That ought to be good enough for you!"

"You haven't got the idea," declared Malcolm. "You've got to *do your best,* no matter whether it's better or worse than some other fellow's best. How about it?"

"All right," answered Rusty. "You can't stump me!"

"What's become of the 'Loyal Knights'?" somebody asked.

"Aw, we had a scrap after the ball game and bust up," replied Rusty. "I tried to get Carl Hayes and Doc Minnerly to join the Troop with me, but they wouldn't do it. Carl said he didn't want to have to wear a uniform around, and Doc said his father was so anxious for him to, now, that he guessed it must be a goody-goody sort of affair, even if you do play baseball."

Just then Frank appeared, a little out of breath.

"Sorry to be late, fellows," he said. "We'll begin the troop meeting right away!"

Of course the first thing that came up for discussion was the result of the game with Troop Two; and Frank told us that Mr. Stead had "wished to express his appreciation of our sportsmanship," in not taking advantage of the umpire's

first decision in the ninth inning, and that he "sincerely wished the prize could be divided equally between the two Troops." Frank also told us that if it hadn't been for winning the Championship, Troop Two wouldn't have been able to go camping at all, because the Troop was such a large one that all the Patrols could not have gone; and none of the Patrols would do it unless the rest were able to come along.

That was all very nice for Troop Two, of course; but it seemed to me that we were in about the same fix they had been, because the money which had been donated at the Troop entertainment in the winter wasn't anywhere near enough to buy all the tents, camping equipment, and food supplies, and also pay our railroad fare to any place which was worth going to at all. In fact, Irving Watson jumped up and said so; and he even added that he didn't see why Sandy had to tell about his foot being off the bag when he caught the ball.

"Why, of course he had to!" said Frank. "I'd have been ashamed of him if he hadn't, if I had found it out. Besides, what's the use in acting like a lot of cry-babies, just because you lost that game? Boy Scouts are supposed to be self-reliant

and resourceful. It won't even prevent our going off camping this summer that I can see!"

"Maybe we could, in somebody's back yard!" exclaimed Irving. "But we wanted to go up to Bantam Lake, where we could have some fun and do real Scout work in the woods—and we haven't got enough money in the treasury for that. We've only got about enough for the tents and a couple of weeks' provisions."

"I know all that," answered Frank cheerfully. "But, just the same, we're going camping for four weeks at Bantam Lake, twenty-five miles from here!"

All the fellows applauded like mad when he told them that, and then Malcolm Graham spoke up.

"I don't see how we are going to do it, Mr. Hall!" he objected. "We figured it all out carefully, and we haven't got enough money for both the tents and four weeks' provisions, even without counting the railroad fare. We've got to have the camping equipment, of course."

Frank simply shrugged his shoulders.

"The trouble with you fellows," he announced, "is that you haven't got practical imaginations. You can't see anything that isn't right square under your noses! You haven't learned to really

use your heads yet. Now, listen! You say the Troop hasn't got money enough for camping equipment, tents, provisions, railroad fare, and incidental expenses for a four weeks' camping trip to Bantam Lake. Well, it hasn't! But it has enough for the camping equipment and provisions, with a little bit left over, hasn't it?"

"Yes, I guess so," answered Malcolm. "But, of course, we need the tents, too, and I don't see where they are going to come from. They don't grow of themselves in this part of the country!"

"Who says we need the tents?" asked Frank. "Why couldn't we make lean-tos do just as well? They can be made just as waterproof as tents, if they are built right. The side openings could be thatched, just like the roof, and I guess the Troop can afford enough canvas or old wagon-tops, or something of that sort, to use as tent-flaps across the front, so as to keep out the rain in a real storm."

"I don't believe we could afford to buy all the canvas we would need, though," said Malcolm. "Even allowing four fellows to a lean-to, it would take four pretty good-sized lean-tos for the whole Troop, besides the one for yourself and Mr. Armstrong. The canvas for all that would cost nearly

as much as for tents—more than the Troop treasury would stand for, anyhow!"

"That's just where the practical imagination comes in," continued Frank. "The Troop treasury could certainly stand for enough canvas for *two* lean-tos; and, if only one Patrol goes up at a time and spends four weeks there, why, that's all that will be needed. Mr. Armstrong and myself will take care of our own. Any more objections?"

"Railroad fare!" added Sandy McLean. "We've got to get there, you know!"

"Have we, really?" asked Frank sarcastically. "Well, then, what's the matter with most of us hiking up? It's only a little over twenty-five miles by road, and we can do that easily in four stages of six or seven miles a day; and then camp over night along the road wherever we find the best place for it."

"What are we going to camp in?" asked Phil Elliott. "We won't have any tents."

"Lean-tos, of course!" answered Frank promptly. "I shouldn't think you'd need anybody to tell you that."

I could see that Rusty Leonard was drinking all this in, and that his opinion of Boy Scouts was probably rising pretty fast. Frank waited for

a moment, to see if there were any more questions or objections, and then he went on:

"Of course I'll go along with you on the hike, while Mr. Armstrong attends to getting the camp ready for us when we get there. Of course no fellow in the Troop will be allowed to undertake the hike unless he has the full consent of his parents, and is first examined by a doctor, to be sure that he's in good enough physical condition to stand it. We'll have just exactly as good a camping trip as Troop Two, and we'll have the satisfaction of knowing that we didn't need to depend upon any outside assistance. Now we'll pass on to the Tenderfoot examination of a fellow whom I guess you all have heard of—Richard Leonard. Will Mr. Leonard please step forward and be examined?"

Rusty came up from the back of the room, where he had been sitting, and stood facing Frank in the open space on the floor in front of the Troop. He acted a little awkward and embarrassed, but he didn't lose his nerve, and passed the Tenderfoot examination, Scout Oath and all, nearly as well as the rest of us had done.

After he had taken the oath, Frank pinned the Tenderfoot badge on his coat pocket, and then asked him:

"Is there anything you would like to say before the Troop votes upon admitting you to membership?"

Rusty turned around and faced us. Then he drew a deep breath.

"Fellows!" he began. "I just want to say that I acted like a mucker in getting up a gang to smash this Club House last fall and try dirty play against you in football. I thought you were a bunch of sissies and mollycoddles. But I guess I was wrong, and I'm willing to admit it, and do what I can to make up for it. I hope you'll let me become a member of this Troop, and I promise on my honor to do my best to be as good a Scout as any other fellow here. That's all."

"Scout Leonard! You will now leave the room while the Troop ballots upon your election," said Frank.

Micky McCarthy jumped to his feet.

"I move that Rusty Leonard be unanimously elected!" he cried.

"I second that motion!" added Phil Elliott and Irving Watson together.

"All in favor will signify it by saying 'Aye'," directed Frank.

Every fellow in the room yelled "Aye" at the top of his lungs.

"I guess you're elected," remarked Frank to Rusty, who hadn't had time to get out of the room after all. Then he rapped on the table for order.

"I will now announce the appointments of the permanent Patrol Leader and Assistant of each Patrol," he said.

The room became so still that you could have heard a pin drop on a feather-bed ten miles away.

"I have made the selections," Frank went on, "according to the rules I told you I would follow at the first meeting of the Troop. I have picked the fellows who have best lived up to the letter and spirit of the Scout Law and Oath, both in their Scout work and in their daily lives, as shown by the reports on the Daily Good Turn; and who have also proved, in one way or another, that they possess to a considerable degree one of the four Scout virtues of loyalty, unselfishness, honor, or bravery. I have not taken into account any Scout who has been guilty of a serious violation of one of these virtues; because it shows that he is not a true Scout at heart and does not deserve the honor of being selected as a leader over the rest. For the First Patrol I have selected Scout Graham for Patrol Leader, and Scout Preston for Assistant."

Everybody cheered and applauded, and Mal-

colm and Ken got red in the face. Then Frank continued:

"I found more difficulty in determining those in the Second Patrol who deserved the reward, because the ones who had done the most to be worthy of it had also committed a more or less serious violation of one or the other of the Scout virtues. This was particularly true in the case of the Patrol Leader, as the Scout upon whom I finally decided has been guilty of losing his temper on one or two occasions in a manner which, under ordinary circumstances, would disqualify him. When I announce his name, however, I think you will all agree with me that the character of his Scout work and the character of the Scout himself, justify my overlooking his mistakes."

"I told you it was going to be Phil Elliott," whispered Irving Watson, who was sitting near me.

"The Scout whom I have chosen for Patrol Leader of the Second Patrol," said Frank slowly, "is—Scout McCarthy."

Most of the fellows were so surprised that at first there was hardly a sound. Then Phil Elliott sprang to his feet.

"Three cheers for Micky!" he called out.

That set us off, and the noise we made nearly

raised the roof. Micky actually blushed a little.

"Aw, cut it out, fellows!" he exclaimed.

"I had almost as much trouble in choosing the Assistant Patrol Leader," continued Frank, when the room was quiet once more. "There were three Scouts who were very evenly matched, both in the way in which they lived up to the spirit of Scout work and in having shown themselves to be possessed to a great extent of one or the other of the Scout virtues. One of the three I was obliged to eliminate because my personal connection with him would not have made it fair to either of us for him to be considered seriously."

(That meant me, I guess, and, even though I had lost the wireless telegraph set father had promised me if I was picked for either Patrol Leader or Assistant, still it was some satisfaction to know that I had done my Scout work and so forth well enough to be in the running if Frank hadn't unfortunately happened to be my cousin. Besides, I was pretty sure father meant to get me the telegraph set anyway.)

"Of the remaining two," Frank proceeded, "I finally selected the one whose Scout work, while less showy, has been more consistent, and who has proved upon various occasions that he has a great deal of self-restraint and loyalty. The

Assistant Patrol Leader of the Second Patrol is Scout Alan McLean!"

Irving Watson must have pretty well guessed who the third fellow probably was; but he jumped right up, just as Phil had done.

"Three cheers for Sandy!" he shouted.

After the cheers had been given, Frank rapped on the table again. When all the noise had died down, he rose from his seat behind the table and stepped forward into the open space in front of it, holding something in his hand.

"I have one more honor to confer," he announced seriously. "This time it is an honor greater than it is in my power to award, and which only the National Commission at Washington can grant. It is the Boy Scout Honor Medal, which is given to a Scout only for saving human life at a great risk to his own. It is a distinction of which any person might well feel proud, and the Troop should feel honored in having for one of its members a boy who is entitled to receive the medal which I hold in my hand. Scout Elliott! Will you please step forward?"

I've never seen anybody so embarrassed as Phil was. But he got to his feet somehow and stood at attention before Frank with his right hand raised in the Scout salute. Frank fastened the

Honor Medal on the left breast of his coat, just above the pocket, and then saluted it.

"Scout Elliott!" he said. "That is a badge of which you may well feel more proud than of any honor which the Troop or myself could give you. It stands for courage, loyalty, and the highest degree of unselfishness. It stamps you as one most worthy the name of Scout and one entitled to the respect and esteem of all men. Scout Elliott! I am proud to salute you!"

There was a deep silence when Frank had finished. Then Micky McCarthy sprang up.

"Three cheers for the Boy Hero of Troop Five!" he yelled.

This time Phil Elliott was the one to blush.

"Aw, cut it out!" he said.

We gave the cheers, all right, and Phil got redder in the face than ever.

"You just wait until I get you up at camp," he added.

(1)

THE END